

Hafa Adai!

Women business leaders featured for WEP 4th cohort. **PAGE 2**
Japanese Autumn Festival on Oct. 26 at Sugar King Park. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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Retirees want Tang replaced as trustee

'Mr. Adventure' jetskis from Saipan to Guam and back



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Vladislav "Mr. Adventure" Melnik gestures a shaka after completing the 268-nautical mile jetski ride from Saipan and Guam over the weekend.

By **MARK RABAGO**
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EDITOR

Vladislav "Mr. Adventure" Melnik set a record of sorts when he rode a jetski from Saipan to Guam and back

last Sept 27, which incidentally was also his birthday.

The 54-year-old, who is a private survival coach in the volcano expedition company he founded in 2010, said he

See **JETSKIS** on Page 4

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The newly established NMI Retirees' Association says it intends to write a letter to the U.S. District Court for the NMI asking if it's possi-



Taitano

ble to replace current Settlement Fund trustee ad litem Joyce C.H. Tang for someone who is from the Commonwealth

In a statement to the media last week, NMI Retirees' Association secretary Mariano Taitano expressed his intent to draft a letter to U.S. District Court for the NMI designated

judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood to replace Tang as the Settlement Fund's trustee as it would ultimately be more cost efficient to have someone

See **RETIREEES** on Page 4

4 more join suit accusing RNV of labor violations



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The RNV Construction building in Garapan.

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The original seven contract workers formerly employed

» **RNV: We intend to take this to jury trial**

by RJCL Corp.'s RNV Construction have amended their complaint against their employer to include four other plaintiffs; all of whom are ac-

cusing the company of violating labor laws.

Last Thursday, the seven former RNV contract workers

See **RNV** on Page 4

Torres: Injustice corrected, Onohey can now move on

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

Robert T. Torres, who represents Tim Onohey in the sexual assault case that was affirmed dismissed by the Supreme Court last week, says his client can now move for-

ward from the injustice that has now been corrected.

Last week, the Supreme Court affirmed an order by the trial court dismissing the charges against Tim Onohey with prejudice.



Torres

The Commonwealth charged Onohey with first degree sexual assault, but later moved to dismiss the charge after the complaining witness changed her testimony. The prosecution asked the court

to dismiss the case without prejudice, which would allow it to re-file charges against Onohey in the future.

In a statement from Torres, he said while his client was wrongfully charged and suffered an injustice, he is

See **TORRES** on Page 4

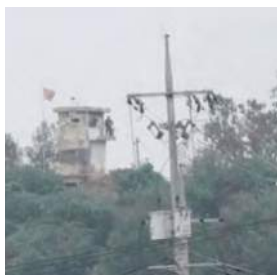
INSIDE



BUSINESS

Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape Company, together with Toyota are excited to announce the return of the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest.

PAGE 9



WORLD

South Korea said Monday it has detected signs that North Korea is preparing to destroy the northern parts of inter-Korean roads no longer in use, as the rivals are embroiled in soaring tensions over North Korea's claim that South Korea flew drones over its territory.

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LIFE & STYLE

The choices on the movie marquee this weekend included Joaquin Phoenix as the Joker, a film about Donald Trump, a "Saturday Night Live" origin story and even Pharrell Williams as a Lego. In the end, all were trounced by an ax-wielding clown.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Women business leaders featured for WEP 4th cohort

The CNMI Small Business Development Center Network at Northern Marianas College and the CNMI Women's Association are proud to announce a remarkable lineup of presenters for the 4th Cohort of the Women Entrepreneurship Project, to be held from Oct. 15 to 18, 2024. This year's cohort will feature industry-leading female professionals who will share their expertise

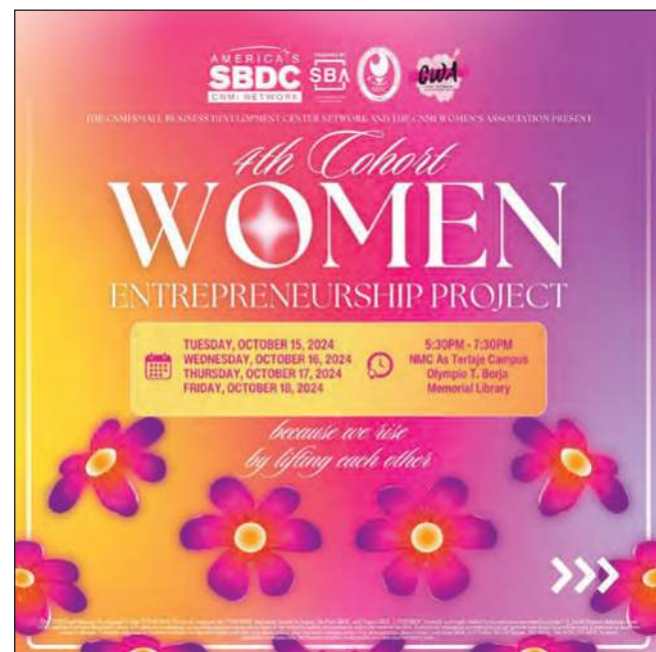
to equip women entrepreneurs with essential business skills and strategies.

The four-day training series will highlight key topics such as credit management, business loan opportunities, state business initiatives, federal contracting, and consignment partnerships, with each session led by a respected female leader from the business community.

■ Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2024:

Credit Ecosystem: Building Credit and Understanding Business Loans presented by Joanne Aldan, assistant branch manager for Bank of Hawaii, and Vickie Izuka, vice president and branch manager for First Hawaiian Bank, Vicente Agulto, assistant vice president and Business Banking officer, and Piarose Aguon, senior merchant services representative of the First Hawai-

ian Bank. The opening session will guide participants through navigating commercial loans, building business credit, and understanding financials. Filling out a loan application can be intimidating. For the second half of the session, join First Hawaiian Bank and learn more about the business loan process and how to complete an application to help ease your mind in pursuit of accessing



capital to realize your dream of becoming a business owner.

■ Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024: Exploring Commercial Loan Programs. The CEDA loan team will provide an in-depth discussion on how entrepreneurs can leverage CEDA's Microloan and Direct Loan programs to drive business growth. Participants will gain valuable insights into accessing these funding opportunities to support their business development. Marcie Tomokane, vice president and CNMI regional manager for Bank of Guam, will present on Bank of Guam's commercial loan offerings, review the commercial loan application, and explain the intake process for clients seeking commercial funding. Presenters will

provide an overview of the SSBCI 2.0 loan opportunity. To access all available information under SSBCI 2.0, visit the CEDA website at <https://www.developcnmi.com/loans>.

■ Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024: The Anatomy of the RFP. Glenna Sakisat Palacios, a contractor to Headquarters Pacific Air Force (HQ PACAF) at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, will lead a session on federal contracting during Day 3 of the Women's Entrepreneurship Project (WEP) Cohort 4 training series. Her session, titled "The Anatomy of the RFP" will offer participants practical insights into how to respond to Request for Proposals (RFPs) in the federal contracting

See WOMEN on Page 4

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence presents the

PURPLE WAVE, WALK, & ROLL

FEATURING MEN'S WALK AGAINST DV

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 • SAN ANTONIO BASKETBALL COURT

IT'S PURPLE THURSDAY! WEAR PURPLE TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY!

TIMELINE

4:30 PM - REGISTRATION
5:00 PM - WAVING
5:30 PM - WALK

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- ✓ Poster Making
- ✓ Free Face Painting
- ✓ Food & Drink Vendors
- ✓ Free DVAM T-shirts while supplies last!

SOLIDARITY FOR SAFETY



JOIN THE MOVEMENT TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



FOR MORE INFORMATION
Please contact the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence at (670) 234-3878 or email info@EndViolenceNMI.org.

f i t @ENDVIOLENCENMI

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Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB), hereby gives notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at 8 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board of Professional Licensing Conference Room, BPL Building on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (09/18/2024)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
- VII. Director's Report
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
 - A. Governor's Office
 - Providing for Modified Government Hours of Executive Branch Departments and Agencies for Fiscal Year 2025
 - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
 - Update on the Professional Counselor and Social Work regulations
- XI. New Business
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review

- Total Reviewed = _____	New Application = _____
- Renewal = _____	Pending = _____
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
 - AG's comments on Special Faculty Permit
 - Update on Kagman Collaborative Practice Agreement
- XV. Announcements
 - A. Next Meeting Date
 - B. Adjournment of Meeting

Japanese Autumn Festival on Oct. 26 at Sugar King Park

By **RACQUEL H. FLOYD**
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Japanese Society of the Northern Mariana Islands announced that the Japanese Autumn Festival will mark its 38th year on Oct. 26 from 5pm to 9pm at Sugar King Park.

Japanese Autumn Festival organizing committee chair Shigeki Tenorio, vice chair Hiroko Tenorio, and Katsuko Takahashi met with Saipan Mayor Ramon “RB” B. Camacho to discuss the event last Thursday at the Saipan Mayor’s Office conference room.

According to Hiroko Tenorio, the Japanese Au-

tumn Festival will feature a lot of Japanese culture and will include its rich cuisine and traditional games.

“So, whoever that can visit our festival can feel the little flavor of Japan,” she said.

The event will be kicked off by a performance from the Saipan Awaodori Team and will be followed by the opening ceremony, distribution of sake, the introduction of Cho-chin (Japanese lantern), performances by the Himawari Kenbukan-Kendo team and Katori Jinja Urayasu no Mai (Katori-Shrine Maiden’s Urayasu dance), before ending with the sponsors gift distribution.



RACQUEL FLOYD

Members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Mariana Islands present the 2024 Japanese Autumn Festival flyer to Saipan Mayor Ramon “RB” B. Camacho, second from left, last Thursday morning at Saipan Mayor’s Office conference room. Joining Camacho in the photo are, from left, Hiroko Tenorio, Katsuko Takahashi, and Shigeki Tenorio.

Shigeki Tenorio said that the vendors are members of the Japanese Society of the Northern Mariana Islands including Aqua Resort Club Saipan, Himawari Restaurant, and Kinpachi Restaurant.

He also mentioned that Camacho has always been supporting them and also thanked the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Department of Land and Natural Resources for their help throughout the years.

“We want the community to know how the Saipan Mayor’s Office is really helping the Japanese community,” said Shigeki Tenorio.

Hiroko Tenorio added that seven Tanapag School students who are part of the trip to Katori City will join the festival.

“Katori City is one of our sister cities and the mayor really put the effort to promote the exchange program. Other than this (event), our Tanapag

Middle School students and one public school in Katori City will visit from Oct. 15 to 22,” she added.

Camacho, meanwhile, said he wants Japanese tourists to return in droves to Saipan.

“I will not stop, and continue to reach out to the Japanese community. We have a permanent mark. So, we need to continue to reach out, so the younger generation will receive those things. So as a mayor of this municipality, I will not stop. The stronger that we build the relationship, the better for all of us,” he said.



CUC
The map of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.’s scheduled water service interruption today in Tanapag, Achugao, and San Roque.

Scheduled water service interruption for 3 villages


The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the general public that there will be a scheduled water service interruption in Tanapag, Achugao, and San Roque today, Oct. 15, from 2pm to 6pm.

The purpose of the scheduled water service interruption is to allow CUC water operators to repair a main service lateral on Mantasa Street.

Customers in these areas will experience low to no water pressure between the specified hours. Please allow one to two hours for the water lines to fully pressurize.

CUC appreciates the public’s cooperation and understanding as we work to ensure reliable service for our customers. For more information, contact CUC’s hotline at (670) 236-4333, visit its website, and monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. For emergencies, contact Customer Service at (670) 664-4282. **(PR)**

NOTICE OF OPEN AUCTION



2018 TOYOTA COROLLA (Color: White)
61,146 Miles | Condition: Good
MINIMUM BID: \$8,000.00

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres (or his designee), for and on behalf of the Bank of Guam, will sell at auction the abovementioned vehicle to the highest bidder on **October 21, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya.**


Terms and Conditions of Sale.

- Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conducting the auction sale:
 - withdraw the chattel mortgage (vehicle) listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such chattel mortgage (vehicle) is accepted;
 - to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
 - to reject any and all bids.
- Minimum Bid.** The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is **\$8,000.00**. No advanced bids will be accepted. The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder “as is, where is” without any warranties. **Bidders must be present in person at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, 5960 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya at 10:00 a.m. to bid.** All bids less than \$8,000.00 are rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a valid identification card (valid CNMI Driver’s License or Passport). The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted.
- Payment.** The entire purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. Personal checks /company checks are not accepted. All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier’s check only. The Bank of Guam shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder. Failure to make payment will result the winning bidder forfeiting his/her winning bid. The next highest bidder (minimum \$8,000.00) may be awarded.
- Change of Terms.** Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the term conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

DATED this 7th day of October, 2024.

/s/ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

NOTICE OF OPEN AUCTION



Vehicle Features:

EX-L Sport Utility 4D	4-Cyl, Turbo 1.5 Liter
Automatic SUV	All Wheel Drive
Push Button Start	Sun-Roof
Keyless Entry	Light Brown Leather Seats
Power Door Locks	Bluetooth Wireless
Power Tailgate Release	Multi-View Camera

2020 HONDA CRV (Color: White)
17,392 Miles
Condition: Excellent
MINIMUM BID: \$22,000.00

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 - to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
 - to reject any and all bids.
- Minimum Bid.** The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is \$22,000.00. No advanced bids will be accepted. The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder “as is, where is” without any warranties. **Bidders must be present in person at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, 5960 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya at 10:00 a.m. to bid.** All bids less than \$22,000.00 are rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a valid identification card (valid CNMI Driver’s License or Passport). The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted.
- Payment.** The entire purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. **Personal checks /company checks are not accepted.** All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier’s check only. The Bank of Guam shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder. Failure to make payment will result the winning bidder forfeiting his/her winning bid. The next highest bidder (minimum \$22,000.00) may be awarded.
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DATED this 7th day of October, 2024.

/s/ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

RNV

From page 1

accusing their employer of violating labor laws filed their first amended complaint with the U.S. District Court for the NMI to include four more former RNV employees similarly situated and to include human trafficking and retaliation claims.

The now 11 plaintiffs are Prospero A. Armia, Nemencio Q. De Leon, Giovan Malazarte, Ian R. Alcosoba, Ranie E. Celestial, Rudy B. Naraja, Victor P. Fragonal, Reyman T. Pineda, Jerry Tortor, Jerry Valles, and Edmar Yangyang.

They are represented by attorneys Aaron Halegua and Colin Thompson.

The amended complaint names RJCL Corp. dba RNV Construction, Homesmart Corp. dba Best Deal General Merchandise, Paragon Construction dba Coreplus Construction, Wandervilla Corp. dba Villa Royal Pawnshop, Ruel R. Villacrusis, Michelle Rueda, Jane Rueda, and Sherwin Resurrection as defendants.

The plaintiffs are a group of Filipino workers who came to the CNMI to work for RNV defendants based on promises of fair compensation, free housing and medical care, and humane working conditions.

According to the amended complaint, they essentially were not provided these things.

“When plaintiffs arrived on Saipan, RNV defendants did not fulfill the promises made in the contracts executed in the Philippines; indeed, plaintiffs were told that these were just a formality to get their CW visa,” said the complaint.

In a statement from RNV’s lawyer Michael Dotts, he said because only 11 of hundreds of RNV employees have come forward, this limited response raises significant questions about the credibility of the claims being made.

“This case was originally filed in September last year by seven former employees. The attorneys representing these plaintiffs were granted a year to amend their complaint and add more individuals to their case if they could. However, after a full year, only four additional employees have joined the lawsuit. Given that RNV employs well over 100 individuals this limited response raises significant questions about the credibility of the claims being made by the plaintiffs. It suggests that the assertions made in the lawsuit do not reflect the reality of the situation. And in fact, as will be shown at trial, what is alleged in the complaint is not true,” he said.

In addition, Dotts alleges that RNV has evidence that some members of the group of plaintiffs approached other RNV employees with promises of \$100,000 and a green card if they joined the lawsuit.

“This revelation paints the lawsuit as not merely a legal grievance but rather as a strategic maneuver aimed at obtaining legal status to remain on Saipan, along with a financial windfall. The lawsuit seems rooted in a desire for personal gain rather than any legitimate concern over rights violations,” he said.

Dotts adds that the human trafficking and retaliation claims are allegedly baseless and lack merit.

“Notably, the human trafficking and retaliation claims were not part of the original complaint filed a year ago, which suggests that they may have been added opportunistically rather than based on any substantive evidence. RNV contends that these claims are baseless and lack merit. Some of the individuals involved in the lawsuit have been on Saipan for many years, and despite having numerous opportunities to report any instances of human trafficking or retaliation if they were real to the appropriate authorities, they failed to do so. Instead, the majority consistently renewed their CW-1 work

visas, which indicates that they were willing to continue their employment and that their rights were not being violated,” he said.

“This raises an important question: Why would these employees choose to file what RNV characterizes as a baseless lawsuit? All of the plaintiffs except two were subject to the touchback provision when they first filed and did not

exit. Their pursuit of this lawsuit is less about justice and more about finding a pathway to extend their stay in the Commonwealth, work here, and get money from RNV that they do not deserve,” Dotts alleges.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

JETSKIS

From page 1

covered the distance of 268 nautical miles between the Smiling Cove Marina on Saipan and the Hagatna Marina in Guam and back solo in about 18 hours.

Melnik said he’s always been guided by one of his favorite poets Lord Alfred Tennyson so the passage “to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield” in “Ulysses” is the principle he lives by everyday.

Asked what was the most daunting challenge he experienced during the 18-hour jetski ride aboard his Sea Doo GTX300 limited 2022 (with special off-shore upgrades), Melnik pointed to the elements.

“Wind and rain and some damn big waves, reefs, and rocks. Anyway, spending time in the open ocean is what I live for. It’s where I go to connect with creation and to recharge my soul. I had to stand up on a jetski to my final destination. It was certainly

tough. The nonstop dance with the sea builds character. The kind you only find on mountaintops, deserts, battlefields, and across oceans,” he said.

Melnik said along the way he saw fantastic vistas and marine life that he will forever cherish.

“When dolphins came and navigated with me I felt an incredible connection with something bigger than you could understand,” he said.

As for setting a jetski record between the U.S. territories that consumed 28 gallons of fuel (he had to bring 15 extra gallons since Rota didn’t have any Supreme gas), he said. “I’m pretty sure nobody has done this before. So, yes, I was thrilled to set a new record in CNMI history. I dedicate this feat to the people of the Mariana Islands and world peace. Make love, not war.”

Melnik also extended his kudos to his support group that left earlier and was waiting for him in Guam.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

TORRES

From page 1

thankful that the Supreme Court exists to check against it. Fortunately, Onopey can now move on from this case.

“This case reminds us that the rule of law is that the guilty are convicted and punished and the innocent are free. While the prosecutor’s job is to do justice, thankfully the courts exist to check against injustice. Defenders don’t represent criminals as is often misunderstood; we defend every person’s constitutional rights. Yours. Here the government knew the evidence before it was that Tim Onopey was innocent and yet it persisted in dismissal without prejudice for no good reason. That was not justice and while the Supreme Court found there

was no bad faith in seeking dismissal, we also know that the motion to dismiss was certainly not made in good faith. The Supreme Court in its decision underscored the court’s role in checking against improper dismissals intended to harass or intimidate defendants. Wrongfully charged and an injustice corrected, Tim Onopey can now try to move on with his life from this case,” he said.

According to an article on the *Saipan Tribune*, Onopey objected, asking the court to dismiss with prejudice, preventing the prosecution from re-filing the charges against him.

The lower court sided with Onopey, dismissing the case with prejudice after finding the prosecution’s motion to dismiss was made in bad faith.

The Commonwealth appealed,

arguing that all such dismissals must be without prejudice and that the prosecution may always re-file charges as long as the statute of limitations has not expired.

In its opinion, the Supreme Court found that the trial court was incorrect to find bad faith in holding that the prosecution’s motion to dismiss was made in bad faith, but affirmed the court’s order dismissing the case without the possibility to re-file charges.

The Supreme Court found that the trial court has authority to manage the terms of dismissal, and that it was not an abuse of the court’s discretion to dismiss the case with prejudice, since the prosecution did not provide the court any reason to allow it time to continue its investigation or re-file charges against Onopey.

RETIREEES

From page 1

from the CNMI serve as trustee.

“I’m going to recommend to the association that we draft a letter to judge Tydingco-Gatewood and to let her know about this situation. We need to bring to light what’s happening, not only regarding the overtime hours, but also we want to ask the possibility of a replacement for our trustee ad litem. We want to ask if she can appoint someone from here because it costs money [for Tang] to travel here to be with program administrator Lilian Pangelinan if she... needs to be here personally. So, it costs money out of our contributions for her to come here, stay at a hotel, rent a car, on top of that her fee. It would be nice to have someone from here,” he said.

Taitano expressed that there are many qualified individuals on island who can take on this task.

“We have qualified people. There are a lot of issues that we need to address,” he said.

dress,” he said.

Taitano said it’s important to have a trustee who is on island and available to meet with retirees as there are many important issues that they want addressed.

“For instance, we need to know the situation of the investment portfolio, how the investment is coming along, whether we’re making good progress. If we are making money and the CNMI government is not making any money, then perhaps a compromise can be made that the CNMI government pays 12.5% and the Settlement Fund pays the other half which is about 12.5% which totals to 25% to add to the total 75% the settlement fund is paying out. We want to find out because when this takeover happened years ago, the total invested assets was over \$80 million and several years later, I found out it increased to over \$100 million. That was many years ago. We want to know the financial situation of the plan because a lot of members have passed on. We need to have a report on the actual standing of the program. Whether

or not its obligation is reducing. The doors closed already, there’s no more new members. It is currently set up as ‘pay as you go.’ If we die and there’s no more retirees to pay out, and if there’s still money, what happens to the money?” he expressed.

In addition, the retirees want a trustee who is physically available to address the concerns regarding overpayments that is currently being collected by the settlement fund.

According to a previous article on the *Saipan Tribune*, the former Retirement Fund, now Settlement Fund, has written letters to a number of retirees who have overtime hours factored into their retirement benefits.

In an interview with retirees last week, they said they are required by the Settlement Fund to pay back anywhere from a few thousand dollars to as high as over \$120,000.

Retirees affected told media that many have already been seeing deductions to their pensions and have even had to stop insurance payments just to make ends meet on their current retirement benefits.

WOMEN

From page 2

space. Attendees will learn how to enhance their proposal development and understand the components necessary for submitting competitive bids, paving the way for new opportunities with government agencies.

■ Friday, Oct. 18, 2024: Consignment Symbiosis: Partnering for Optimal Inventory Growth. Elina Gharti Chhetri, owner of Marianas Creations, will share her knowledge on how consignment partnerships can boost inventory management, sales, and brand exposure for small businesses. Also presenting on the final day is SBDC associate network director Mercilynn Kaneshi Palec who will guide attendees through the essentials of setting up their booth, covering everything from creating an inviting and visually appealing space to showcasing products or services effectively. Palec will discuss how to organize the booth for optimal flow, highlight key elements of branding, and share tips for engaging with visitors to leave a lasting impression.

Nadine C. Deleon Guerrero, CNMI SBDC network director, expressed her enthusiasm for the powerful slate of presenters for this year’s cohort. “These presenters are not only leaders in their fields, but also serve as inspiring role models for our aspiring and established women entrepreneurs. This predominantly female lineup reflects the core mission of the Women Entrepreneurship Project—to empower women to lead, innovate, and succeed in their businesses.”

Deleon Guerrero further emphasized the significance of these collaborations, stating, “We’re proud

to partner with these talented women who are bringing invaluable insights to our participants. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive community of entrepreneurs in the CNMI.”

The Women Entrepreneurship Project invites women across the CNMI to take part in this unique opportunity to gain knowledge, connect with mentors, and foster partnerships that can take their businesses to the next level.

To learn more about the cohort sessions, visit the following links:

■ Oct. 15: Credit Ecosystem – <https://marianas.ecenterdirect.com/events/1019166>

■ Oct. 16: Exploring Commercial Lending Opportunities with CEDA & BOG –<https://marianas.ecenterdirect.com/events/1019167>

■ Oct. 17: The Anatomy of the RFP – <https://marianas.ecenterdirect.com/events/1019168>

■ Oct. 18: Consignment Symbiosis – <https://marianas.ecenterdirect.com/events/1019169>

Attendees must be a registered CNMI SBDC client and interested individuals are able to register via phone or email. Certificates of completion will be awarded to those who attend all four sessions. Participants who miss one session may still attend but will not receive a certificate.

For more information, visit www.cnmisbdc.com or contact us at (670) 237-6888/cnmisbdc@marianas.edu. Follow us on social media for the latest updates: Instagram @cnmisbdc and Facebook at CNMI Small Business Development Center Network. (PR)

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Social Security announces 2.5% benefit increase for 2025

Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income payments for more than 72.5 million Americans will increase 2.5% in 2025, the Social Security Administration announced. On average, Social Security retirement benefits will increase by about \$50 per month starting in January.

Over the last decade the COLA increase has averaged about 2.6%. The COLA was 3.2% in 2024.

Nearly 68 million Social Security beneficiaries will see a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment beginning in January 2025. Increased payments to nearly 7.5 million people receiving SSI will begin on Dec. 31, 2024. **(Note: Some people receive both Social Security benefits and SSI)**

“Social Security benefits and SSI payments will in-

crease in 2025, helping tens of millions of people keep up with expenses even as inflation has started to cool,” said Martin O’Malley, commissioner of Social Security.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) is slated to increase to \$176,100 from \$168,600.

Social Security begins notifying people about their new benefit amount by mail starting in early December.

This year, for the first time, Social Security beneficiaries will receive a newly designed and improved COLA notice that makes it easier for customers to find the information they need most. The simplified

Tax Rate	2024	2025
Employee	7.65%	7.65%
Self-Employed	15.30%	15.30%

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index from the third quarter of 2023 through the third quarter of 2024, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries will receive a 2.5% COLA for 2025. The 7.65% tax rate is the combined rate for Social Security and Medicare. The Social Security portion is 6.20% on earnings up to the applicable taxable maximum amount. The Medicare portion is 1.45% on all earnings. Also, as of January 2013, individuals with earned income of more than \$200,000 (\$250,000 for married couples filing jointly) pay an additional 0.9% in Medicare taxes. The tax rates shown above do not include the 0.9%.

	2024	2025
Social Security Disability Thresholds		
Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)		
Non-Blind	\$1,550/mo.	\$1,620/mo.
Blind	\$2,590/mo.	\$2,700/mo.
Trial Work Period (TWP)	\$1,110/mo.	\$1,160/mo.
Maximum Social Security Benefit: Worker Retiring at Full Retirement Age		
	\$3,822/mo.	\$4,018/mo.
SSI Federal Payment Standard		
Individual	\$ 943/mo.	\$ 967/mo.
Couple	\$1,415/mo.	\$1,450/mo.
SSI Resource Limits		
Individual	\$2,000	\$2,000
Couple	\$3,000	\$3,000
SSI Student Exclusion		
Monthly limit	\$2,290	\$2,350
Annual limit	\$9,230	\$9,460
Estimated Average Monthly Social Security Benefits Payable in January 2025		
	Before 2.5% COLA	After 2.5% COLA
All Retired Workers	\$1,927	\$1,976
Aged Couple, Both Receiving Benefits	\$3,014	\$3,089
Widowed Mother and Two Children	\$3,669	\$3,761
Aged Widow(er) Alone	\$1,788	\$1,832
Disabled Worker, Spouse and One or More Children	\$2,757	\$2,826
All Disabled Workers	\$1,542	\$1,580

COLA notice is now only one page, uses plain and personalized language, and provides exact dates and dollar amounts of a person’s new benefit amount and any deductions.

Individuals who have a personal my Social Security account can view their COLA notice online, which is secure, easy, and faster than receiving a letter in the mail. People can set up text or email alerts when there is a new message—such as their COLA notice—waiting for them in my Social Security.

People will need to have a personal my Social Security account by Nov. 20 to see their COLA notice online. To get started, visit www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

Information about Medicare changes for 2025 will be available at www.medicare.gov. For Social Security beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare, the 2025 benefit amount will be available via my Social Security’s Message Center starting in late November. Those who have not opted to receive messages online will receive their COLA notice by mail in December.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers as determined by the Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics.

To read more, visit www.ssa.gov/cola. **(PR)**



PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP24-CHCC/ CAS-029

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 25, 2024 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)


PROCUREMENT OF PURITAN BENNETT 980 VENTILATORS AND FISHER & PAYKEL 850 HUMIDIFIERS
(Outright Purchase, Shipping, Delivery, Installation, Training and Commissioning) for CHC Hospital / Respiratory Care Department)

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE (WWW.CHCC.HEALTH). ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.


THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL. IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION



INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-24-027

ISLAND WIDE ROAD RESTORATION, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Island Wide Road Restoration, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity work consists of excavation, placing of flowable fill and asphalt to replace pavement areas cut by CUC to repair waterlines. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC and DPW. The duration of the contract is one year (365 calendar days) from date of award with an option to extend for an additional year if exercised by CUC.

The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **October 10, 2024 at 9:30 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference, Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and seven (7) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **“Island Wide Road Restoration”** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 28, 2024** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of the Contractor’s preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier’s check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers’ questions, concerns and qualifications shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI’s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI’s Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on October 11, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email, manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Rodolfo Rodriguez, Water and Wastewater Division Manager via email, rodolfo.rodriguez@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, P&S Senior Administrative Technician, via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

UNITED MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL, LLC (UMI)

NOW HIRING FOR IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT !

We are looking for skilled and experience individuals to join our construction team for the following craft positions:

- Rebar fabricators
- Form-Concrete Works
- Carpenters

Requirements:

- Rebar and Form work experience required
- Carpenters: Skilled in carpentry trades
- Ability to work in a team environment and able to follow Safety and QC requirements

Qualified applicants please contact
(670) 789-6632 or (671) 777-3710

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Progressive politicians lose the plot on fighting terror

It's no coincidence that anti-Israel student groups at Massachusetts colleges and across the country called for a "Week of Rage" starting on the one-year anniversary of the Oct. 7 massacre by Hamas as progressive lawmakers demanded a cease-fire.

The protesters who swarmed Storow Drive, the "ragers" who reportedly vandalized the John Harvard statue and smashed windows at the university and their marching, chanting ilk nationwide find validation in the words and deeds of Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Sen. Ed Markey, Rep. Ayanna Pressley, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and others.

The premise: Israel can get hit, but it can't hit back.

On Monday, as people mourned those slaughtered by Hamas a year ago, prayed for the hostages still held in Gaza and for those killed in captivity, Warren blasted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for "unleash(ing) unthinkable violence on innocent civilians in Gaza."

Hezbollah has been launching rockets since Oct. 7 on Israel, and is still barraging civilians with missiles. Has a cease-fire been demanded of them? Where was progressive criticism of Hamas on Oct. 7? Who slammed its leaders for unleashing hell, killing babies, raping women and murdering 1,200 innocents?

On Monday, Rep. Pressley said she was "thinking of" Israelis murdered by Hamas, the Israeli hostages and "the more than 41,000 Palestinians killed by the Israeli military over the last year."

Is it any wonder that students and other left-wing anti-Israel protesters feel justified in shouting "from the river to the sea," a tacit call for the end of Israel.

Antisemitism has surged since Oct. 7, and so has violent rhetoric aimed at Israel and Jews.

A pro-Palestinian group at Tufts University marked Oct. 7 with a planned protest urging students to "join the student Intifada" and posting images of assault rifles on their social media account.

As we've learned over the past year, those who camp out and march as part of their revolutionary cosplay are largely clueless as to the history of Israel, Palestine, and why calling Israelis "colonizers" couldn't be further from the truth. So it is doubtful that they know what the "intifada" was and what happened during it.

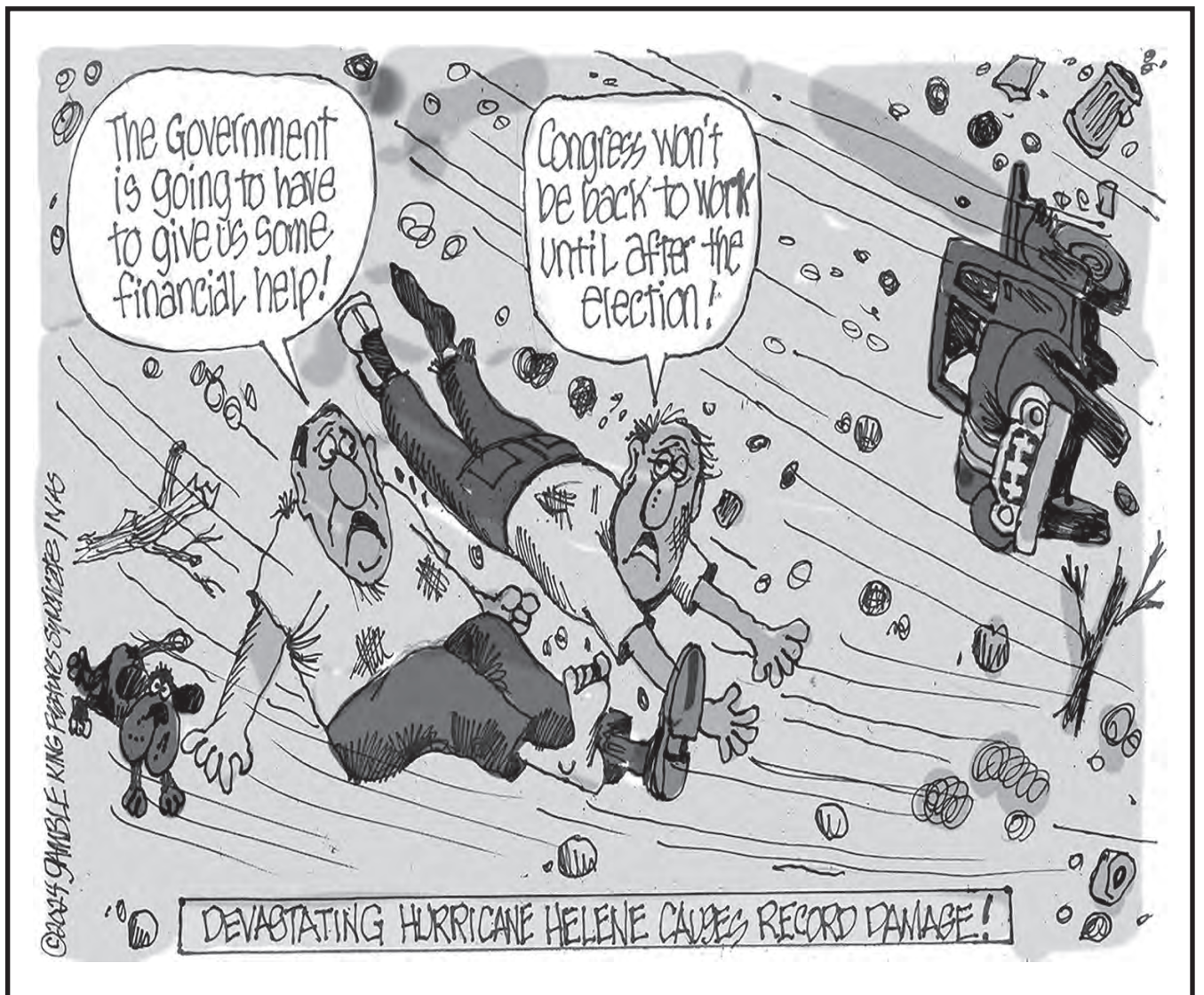
From 1987-1990 and 2000-2005, Israel was again the site of terrorist acts against its citizens, most notably from suicide bombers. They targeted buses loaded with passengers, bus stations and other sites, leaving death and bloody chaos in their wake.

Calling for a new intifada is not something to be taken lightly. Nor is "death to America," a phrase which has also reared its head, often accompanied by the burning of American and Israeli flags. Over the summer, a pro-Palestinian demonstrator went viral for spray-painting "Hamas is comin'" on the side of a Christopher Columbus statue in Washington, D.C.

These are not just expressions. These are wake-up calls.

We desperately need leaders who can recognize this, who do more than pay lip service to the victims of terror and who fight the ignorance of useful idiots with facts.

See **PROGRESSIVE** on Page 7



An economist's guide to helping victims of Helene and Milton

With North Carolina still reeling from the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton landing in Florida, it is natural to ask: What is the best way to help the victims of these storms, and how can society best protect itself from such damage in the future? As an economist, I realize that I come at these questions with a bit of a different perspective.

First, whenever possible it is better to use private insurance, such as homeowner's insurance and flood insurance, to protect against loss. One of the functions of insurance is to make losers at least partially whole after the fact, but another is to make risky decisions too expensive to contemplate in the first place.

This second function of insurance is especially important for Florida. The state is vulnerable to storms, so market prices for insurance should be allowed to adjust to higher levels, most of all for vulnerable properties. High prices in an area are a sign that building and renovation should not take place there. With fewer people living in vulnerable areas, the cost of storms will fall accordingly.

That sounds harsh, but "incentives matter" is the first and primary principle of economics, and sometimes incentives should be allowed to operate. Unfortunately, Florida has a state-run insurer of last resort which continues to bail out homeowners.

Political debates tend to frame this issue as whether to help poor, struggling homeowners. And indeed they may well suffer some terrifying losses because of storms. But whatever you think of such bailouts after the fact, with better incentives ahead of time, that issue will come up less often.

Economists are better at ex ante institutional design than at adjudicating all claims on the public purse ex post. The upshot is that insurance costs need to rise to prohibitive levels in some areas. Even state-run insurers should accept this reality.

A second lesson is that private insurance does not always work. Some risks are so rare that people do not insure against them, or maybe insurance is not available because there would not be enough profit in the market to cover the costs of writing and selling the contracts. Yet ex post, once the true risks of the world are revealed, there is value in providing insurance services. The storm that hit Asheville is an example of this, as such powerful storms have not had much precedent in that area.

By **TYLER COWEN**

Bloomberg Opinion

Tyler Cowen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist, a professor of economics at George Mason University and host of the *Marginal Revolution* blog.



In these cases, there is no straightforward economic answer as to how much aid should flow. Storm victims have some claim on public resources, but so do taxpayers. Typically economists will not be able to answer the hypothetical question of how much insurance people would have bought had there been an active market with more accurate risk assessments. We need to be correspondingly modest about our ability to produce a verifiable answer as to the best course of action.

Another principle of disaster relief is that, no matter how generous or competent the response, not everyone can be helped. Even the best institutions are imperfect, and in some cases it may be difficult or even impossible to assist victims.

At the same time, some victims will be relatively easy to help right away—and some of them will be noncitizens. They should still get aid, which will mean that sometimes noncitizens will do better by the US government than citizens. This fact does not reflect anything sinister. At the same time, it does not follow that the government has to provide long-term aid to asylum seekers. Nonetheless some degree of differential treatment needs to be accepted, if only because of the realities on the ground.

Finally, disaster response should not be bureaucratized unduly. Asking for proof of citizenship simply isn't practical. If someone has just lost their home or place to live, they have probably also lost all their important papers. Again, this means that some noncitizens will receive some significant benefits while some citizens will not. It was never going to be otherwise.

We economists have a reputation, mostly justified, as being hard headed. But in some cases, such as disaster relief, our way of thinking can enable a more humane outcome.

Of, for, and by the people—CNMI impotency!

Second of a three-part series

The truth is we are seeing more taxes, fewer flights with arrivals continuing to decline we must ask, if we ask “are we better off now than before COVID, the answer will be a resounding no, as nothing has changed for the better for the people nor for the CNMI. The impotence in our economy for the people is obvious with no real improvements and nothing even planned to improve our economy other than crying to the feds and taxes. This is why I’ve been screaming and yelling for years to get a real economist on the Hill working with our executive and Legislature but instead we continue to suffer under what I see as picknick table discussions and decisions on our economy. Just because one may be smart, it by-no-means qualifies them as an economist—so who is really our economist!

We are still fooling around with the Casino Commission that should have been fired nearly two years ago for their impotency but that’s our politics for the people. Now they claim to be waiting for another member to appointed so they can make a decision for the people that only takes the governor to do. I have been warning the people for at least two years that this commission is not worth the paper and ink that put them in power. Heck, they didn’t even collect their own salaries so what makes anyone think they are going to do anything that will bring in revenues for the CNMI, which was their primary purpose. Yet, IPI owes the people of the CNMI over \$164 million with no official claim filed in court by the Casino Commission for this money owed to the people.

When are we the people going to be able to really turn the page and move on to better things, as the Casino Commission didn’t even try to get stock in the hotel/casino when I told them when COVID hit, as I knew it was over then. Only one representative (Marrisa Flores) spoke out trying to do something without success, as she didn’t have any real support from her counterparts.

Our justice system is also not working in the best interests of the people when it comes to prosecuting high-profile cases. No disrespect but, we have some of the smartest people in the CNMI in our justice system, yet their focus has been so much on the here and now that forecasting and preparing for the future is a lost art. For entirely too long we the people have been seeing all of our high-profile cases having to be adjudicated by a pro tempore judge. Well, after two decades or more, it’s time to change the law to allow our chief justice to appoint a judge from outside the CNMI every two years limiting their stay and ending the scenarios when all of our judges recuse themselves. If Herman Guerrero can get the Legislature to create a phony bill for education then I’m highly confident our chief justice can get the Legislature to fix this never-ending problem a pro tempore judge—it’s reform for the people.

Ambrose has always been of and for the people and what’s best for all of us and not just those political emissaries who want to capitalize on favoritism/nepotism for selfish reason, like we see is going on with the cannabis industry. But we can see this same phenomenon going on when the local people are even being squeezed out by big business “favoritism” over their own

By **AMBROSE M. BENNETT**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Ambrose M. Bennett is an economist who minored in sociology, political scientist, a retired teacher, and former CNMI Board of Education member, a James Madison Fellow (U.S. constitutional scholar), a Fulbright-Hays and lifetime humanities scholar who resides in Kagman III in the CNMI.

island, as any economist worth their title will tell you Managaha is too small and will never be suited for a big business operation, that kills the smaller operators, unless they make it a complete water/theme park. There is only so much to be made from the Managaha operation and giving most of it to only one is a virtual monopoly that kills the very people who own the island. It is clear example of the favoritism that exist within the confines of our government for a monopoly of one to be given virtual absolute control of Managaha and I’m the only one speaking up and fighting for these people, not their frivolous elected leader(s). Stop killing the smaller operators, which is why Garapan is a mess today, playing power games with Best Sunshine that has since road off into the sunset being way over \$100-million richer, as I warned them when it switched to IPI but no one listened. We need a real economist and fighters for the people on the Hill. If we don’t get better independent and Democrat politicians and stop electing the same old GOP gang then we voters are doomed to keep down the same path to nowhere—and that’s a fact jack!

What do Americans think of the Israel-Hamas war now? The polling is surprising

In the year since the attacks by Hamas against Israeli civilians on Oct. 7, 2023, much has changed.

Israel launched a large-scale military operation on Gaza, the geographic base of Hamas. The lives of millions of Palestinians have been thrown into destitution, in addition to the tens of thousands killed. Hamas, which governs Gaza, has been severely weakened but not destroyed. Most concerning, the war has widened. Israeli forces are now attacking the group Hezbollah in Lebanon, and both Israel and Iran, which is the backer of Hezbollah and Hamas, are engaged in tit-for-tat military and missile strikes.

While the region has witnessed much conflict over decades, the current war seems like a watershed moment. It could serve as the event that finally catalyzes a lasting transformation for the region. Whether that transformation will be for the better of all who live there remains to be seen.

But in another way, little has changed. Despite international concern and even legal proceedings regarding how Israel has conducted its military operations, President Joe Biden’s administration remains firm in its commitment to aiding Israel militarily. The Biden administration’s continued support reflects a long-standing bipartisan consensus in Washington to see Israel as a strong, and at times lone, ally of the United States in the region.

But there is another way in which much has remained the same: the view of the American public toward both Israel and the Palestinians. This might be surprising, given the widespread attention over the past year to protests on and off college campuses, city councils across the U.S. calling for a cease-fire and a general sense that the U.S.-Israel “special relationship” is at a turning point.

According to new survey data produced by The Pearson Institute and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, to coincide with this month’s Pearson Global Forum, public views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict generally, and this war specifically, are relatively static.

A survey conducted last November, one month into the current war in Gaza, found that only a minority of U.S. adults, 40%, saw Israel’s military response as having “gone too far.” Given the many protests, as well as assessments by the State Department regarding Israel’s lack of safeguards for noncombatants, one might expect that number to have changed over the past year. It has—but marginally. A poll conducted in September put the number at 42% of respondents. This means that a majority of respondents in both polls saw Israel’s response as “about right” or as having “not gone far enough.”

Similarly, views regarding U.S. support toward Israel have

By **PAUL POAST**

Chicago Tribune



Paul Poast is a faculty affiliate at the Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts and an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

remained largely static. In November, 43% of respondents responded that the U.S. provided “too much” aid to Israel. In September of this year, that number dropped marginally to 41%. But these numbers do not simply reflect a strong pro-Israel sentiment among the American public.

The surveys found a similar stability in support for aiding the Palestinians. In November, only 29% of respondents thought the U.S. was providing “too much” humanitarian relief to the Palestinians in Gaza. That number dropped to 24% of respondents in September. Related to these numbers, feelings of sympathy toward the sides have remained stable, with slight increases from November to September in sympathy toward Israel (21% to 25%) and the Palestinians (9% to 15%). Such stability in views found in the Pearson-led surveys is consistent with other polling data that identified only slight changes in sympathy for Israelis and Palestinians.

The survey as a whole seems to capture how the inherent complexity of the conflict makes it difficult for Americans to have a unified and consistent view on the matter. They may have sympathy for the Israeli people, but, like Biden, see the Israeli prime minister as an impediment to peace. They are saddened by the plight of the Palestinians but appalled by the actions of Hamas. This contrasts with Western perceptions, and specifically American perspectives, regarding the war in Ukraine, where the aggressor, Russia, and the defender, Ukraine, are clear, the complexity of the Israel-Palestinian relationship in general and the war in Gaza in particular leads to such stability of inconsistent views.

The survey numbers could also simply reflect a general malaise, a war weariness among the American public. While the United States is not a direct and full participant in any of the numerous conflicts presently engulfing the world, the most since the end of World War II, it is a supporter that is funding and arming various states and actors involved in these many conflicts. Unfortunately for the public, while it might have grown tired of this world of wars, the raging of those wars is one trend that is unlikely to change between now and next October.

PROGRESSIVE

From page 6

Kudos to Gov. Maura Healey for placing blame for the war where it belongs — on Hamas. We may not agree with her on many issues, but we applaud Healey for standing on the right side of history. Here’s hoping more progressives in positions of power will join her.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The toll of patronage and nepotism

Dear CNMI community,

Political hires, often referred to as patronage or nepotism, are appointments made based on personal or political connections rather than qualifications or merit. In many organizations, particularly within government institutions, these types of hires create imbalances in the workforce. The focus shifts from selecting the most qualified individuals for a role to prioritizing those with political ties or loyalty to influential figures.

A common issue that arises from this practice is the sentiment of “helping but not being helped.” Often, individuals who assist in securing positions for others through political means find themselves overlooked or ignored when they need support. This fosters a culture of favoritism and one-sided loyalty, leaving those who initially helped feeling dislusioned or betrayed.

Furthermore, hiring based on political connections rather than qualifications undermines an organization’s overall efficiency. It often places unqualified individuals in key roles, individuals who may lack the necessary skills or experience to carry out their responsibilities effectively. This results in poor decision-making, lower staff morale, and a decline in organizational performance. Qualified individuals who are passed over for such roles may

feel resentful, contributing to a workplace culture filled with distrust and dissatisfaction.

In the long term, political hires damage the integrity of the hiring process itself. They weaken institutions and limit opportunities for capable individuals to contribute their expertise. Over time, this practice perpetuates a cycle where positions are filled based on loyalty rather than competence, further entrenching inefficiency and favoritism.

In closing, I ask:

How many talented public and private sector employees have left the CNMI to seek better opportunities elsewhere?

How many qualified individuals have been let go to make room for unqualified hires within the government?

How many employees have been displaced due to the mismanagement of ARPA funds?

These questions call for reflection on the consequences of political hiring practices and the impact they have on the CNMI’s workforce and future.

Sincerely,

Frankie Manglona
Dandan Village

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms Guam. Partly cloudy with isolated showers cnmi. East to southeast winds 5 to 10 mph, becoming northeast Wednesday.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms Guam. Partly cloudy with isolated showers cnmi. East to southeast winds 5 to 10 mph, becoming northeast Wednesday.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	
88°	78°	88°	78°	87°	79°	87°	79°	88°	78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE

PICTURE TIME: 4:46 AM MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Little change was made for the weather forecast. Included a possibility for locally heavy showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms for this afternoon, due to potential for island convection if winds remain light enough. Winds along may be just right to drag a thunderstorm into the coastal waters of Guam, so included a slight chance of thunder in the marine forecast as well. Meanwhile, the marine forecast remains unchanged.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°	
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	84° / 77°	
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°	
Majuro	Sunny	85° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:08 AM	5:56 PM
Wednesday	6:08 AM	5:55 PM
Thursday	6:08 AM	5:55 PM
Friday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM
Saturday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:33 AM	4:15 PM
Wednesday	-	4:32 AM	4:57 PM
Thursday	-	5:32 AM	5:41 PM
Friday	-	6:33 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	-	7:37 AM	7:18 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	63° / 55°	
Beijing	Haze	71° / 58°	
Hong Kong	Fair	84° / 74°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 75°	
London	Partly Cloudy	66° / 57°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 58°	
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	91° / 79°	
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	66° / 45°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
New York	Clear	72° / 58°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	83° / 67°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	70° / 52°	
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 63°	
Rome	Sunny	77° / 55°	
Salem	Partly Cloudy	87° / 67°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	64° / 50°	
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	73° / 61°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	79° / 63°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	80° / 58°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:06 AM	High Tide	1.75	
11:40 AM	Low Tide	0.09	
6:11 PM	High Tide	1.99	
-	-	-	

NEWS DESK

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2024

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5	UA825	5:30PM	10:00PM	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily up to Oct 26	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
				7C2306/3211	11:10PM	3:30PM+1	Daily from Oct 27
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:30AM	6:25AM	Daily from Oct 28	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily up to Oct 26
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily up to Oct 27	7C3211	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily from Oct 27
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily up to Oct 26	TW307	8:00PM	1:30AM+1	Daily up to Oct 27
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily up to Oct 26	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
7C3212	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily from Oct 27	7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX77	3:05AM	6:00AM	1, 5	HX76	6:25PM	1:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

LOCAL

No evidence of major fuel spill on reef where NZ navy ship sank

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Divers and marine experts found no evidence of a major fuel spill on a Samoan reef Tuesday after a New Zealand navy ship ran aground and sank, Samoa's deputy prime minister said.

All 75 people on board the HMNZS Manawanui evacuated safely as the boat foundered about a mile off the coast of Upolu, Samoa, early Sunday. The ship was one of only nine in New Zealand's navy and was the first the country lost at sea since World War II.

Samoan Deputy Prime Minister Tuala Tevaga Iosefo Ponifasio had earlier said a fuel spill was "highly probable." But he said Tuesday there was no evidence of oil spilling onto the reefs, ashore and nearby area, except for "small leakages of oil coming from the vessel." That had been contained using specialized equipment, Ponifasio said in a statement.

The vessel's passengers—including civilian scientists and foreign military personnel—left the vessel on life boats in "challenging conditions" and darkness, New Zealand's Chief of Navy Rear Admiral Garin Golding told reporters. It took five hours for the first survivors to reach land, he said.

One person was treated in a hospital for minor injuries and has been discharged, the



AP
In this image released by New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), crew of the HMNZS Manawanui that sank in Samoa on Oct. 6, 2024, walk from their plane after landing at RNZAF Base Auckland, from Samoa, in Whenuapai, New Zealand, Monday, Oct. 7, 2024.

military said. Up to 17 others sustained cuts, bruises or suspected concussions. An Air Force plane carrying 72 people from the ship landed at an air base in Auckland on Monday night.

New Zealand will hold a court of inquiry into the loss of the ship. The cause of the accident is not known, but Defense Minister Judith Collins told 1News on Monday that she had been told a loss of power to the vessel had led to its grounding.

The specialist dive and hydrographic vessel had been in service for New Zealand since 2019, but was 20 years old and had previously belonged to Norway, Collins said. It was surveying a reef off the coast

of Upolu, Samoa's most populous island, when it ran aground on the reef and began taking on water.

Photos and videos taken from the shore appeared to show the ship listing before disappearing completely below the waves, with a large plume of smoke rising where it sank.

Manu Percival, a surfing tour guide who works in the area where the ship sank, told The Associated Press by phone that oil was not visible from the ship but debris had littered the water and shoreline, and locals were not gathering shellfish as they normally did. It was too soon to know if the "fragile" reef ecosystem had been damaged, he said.

France's new premier postpones election in New Caledonia until next year

NICE, France (AP)—France's new Prime Minister Michel Barnier announced recently that a provincial election scheduled for December in the restive French Pacific territory of New Caledonia has been postponed for a year.

During his inaugural address to parliament, Barnier also said a controversial bill proposed by President Emmanuel Macron to amend the constitution to change voting lists in the territory would not be forwarded to a joint meeting of parliament for ratification. The territory's Indigenous Kanak people fear changes to the voting registry would favor recent arrivals to the Pacific archipelago.

Tensions in New Caledonia have long been simmering between white settler communities loyal to Paris and pro-independence Kanak people.

The adoption of the voter list bill in May by both houses of French parliament led to mass demonstrations by pro-independence groups that turned violent, prompting

Macron to declare a state of emergency and fly thousands of police and army reinforcements to the Pacific territory.

Thirteen people, mostly Kanaks, and two police officers, have been killed and nearly 3,000 people have been arrested since New Caledonia's police launched an investigation just days after the unrest started in May.

Barnier said the provincial election would be postponed from its scheduled date of Dec. 15 until the end of 2025.

New Caledonia has been living through an "exceptionally grave crisis," Barnier said and added that he will tackle the issues early next year when he plans to convene a government committee on France's overseas territories. Its priority will be addressing and remedying "the high cost of living that affects our compatriots" in the overseas territories that extend from the Indian Ocean and the Pacific to the Caribbean.

Last month, violent protests broke out on the French island of Martinique over the high

cost of living, with gunfire injuring at least six police officers and one civilian. France sent a group of special anti-riot police to quell the unrest on its Caribbean territory, where protesters have gathered despite the government barring demonstrations in parts of the island.

"I am aware of the suffering and anguish felt by the people of New Caledonia and I want to reiterate that the state and my government will be at their side," Barnier said during Tuesday's layout of his government's policies to lawmakers in the National Assembly, France's influential lower house of parliament.

New Caledonia became French in 1853 under Emperor Napoleon III, Napoleon's nephew and heir. It became an overseas territory after World War II, with French citizenship granted to all Kanaks in 1957. Kanaks have long sought to break free from France after suffering from strict segregation policies and widespread discrimination.

Business

Toyota Dream Car Art Contest launched



ATKINS KROLL
Pictured are the winners of the 2024 Toyota Dream Car Art Contest. Maxine Del Rosario, Almar Salomon, Chaebin Suh, and Kayden Wong with the Atkins Kroll leadership team during the 2024 Annual Awards showcasing their Dream Cars.

TAMUNING, Guam—Atkins Kroll, (AK), an Inchcape Company, together with Toyota are excited to announce the return of the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest, inviting young artists across Guam and Saipan to unleash their creativity and imagine the future of mobility. This annual global contest aims to inspire children to envision the vehicles of tomorrow and how they can shape a better world.

The contest is open to children ages 4-15 years old, with entries accepted in the following age divisions.

- 4-7 years old
- 8-11 years old
- 12-15 years old

This year's theme—Draw Your Dream, Drive the Future—encourages children to think big and envision how future vehicles can bring positive change to their communities and the world.

Atkins Kroll's promise is simple: Here for Guam, Here for Saipan, Here for Life. Atkins Kroll is dedicated to empowering the next generation to think beyond today and create a future that embraces

sustainability, mobility, and innovation.

Through the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest, Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape Company, reinforces its global purpose of Bringing mobility to the world's communities—today, tomorrow, and for the better. This contest embodies that mission, inviting young dreamers to imagine how mobility can evolve to improve lives and create a brighter, more connected tomorrow.

To enter, participants can download entry forms at akguam.com or contact marketing@akguam.com for more information. Entries may be submitted to Atkins Kroll Toyota Showrooms in Guam and Saipan. Deadline is January 31, 2025.

Atkins Kroll will award first, second, and third place winners in each age division with a special prize package, which includes water park passes. In addition, Atkins Kroll is introducing the "People's Choice Award," where the recipient will earn a \$1,914 donation to their school. Winners will be an-

nounced in February of 2025.

Atkins Kroll is the leading distributor of vehicles in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Micronesia enabling it to provide a full range of products and services in the region. Atkins Kroll is Guam's oldest corporation established in 1914 and represents Toyota, Lexus, BMW, Chevrolet, Toyota Rent A Car, Avis, Budget and Payless Rental Car, and AC Delco brands. In December 2021 Atkins Kroll acquired Morrico Equipment, one of Guam's largest heavy equipment dealerships representing Freightliner, Hyundai Construction Equipment, Kohler Power Systems, Rosenbauer Fire Trucks and Thomas Built School Buses. Morrico Equipment operates new and used heavy equipment sales, rental, parts, diesel fuel delivery, Trashco Guam, and specialized diesel repair service to Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. (PR)

TikTok was aware of risks kids and teens face on its platform, legal document alleges

TikTok was aware that its design features are detrimental to its young users and that publicly touted tools aimed at limiting kids' time on the site were largely ineffective, according to internal documents and communications exposed in lawsuit filed by the state of Kentucky.

The details are among redacted portions of Kentucky's lawsuit that contains the internal communications and documents unearthed during a more than two-year investigation into the company by various states across the country.

Kentucky's lawsuit was filed this week, alongside separate complaints brought forth by attorneys general in a dozen states as well as the District of Columbia. TikTok is also facing another lawsuit from the Department of Justice and is itself suing the Justice Department over a federal law that could ban it in the U.S. by mid-January.

The redacted information—which was inadvertently revealed by Kentucky's attorney general's office and first reported by Kentucky Pub-

lic Radio—touches on a range of topics, most importantly the extent to which TikTok knew how much time young users were spending on the platform and how sincere it was when rolling out tools aimed at curbing excessive use.

Beyond TikTok use among minors, the complaint alleges the short-form video sharing app has prioritized "beautiful people" on its platform and has noted internally that some of the content-moderation metrics it has publicized are "largely misleading." (AP)

World

SEOUL SAYS:

N. Korea preparing to destroy northern parts of inter-Korean roads

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea said Monday it has detected signs that North Korea is preparing to destroy the northern parts of inter-Korean roads no longer in use, as the rivals are embroiled in soaring tensions over North Korea's claim that South Korea flew drones over its territory.

Destroying the roads would be in line with leader Kim Jong Un's push to cut off ties with South Korea, formally cement it as his country's principal enemy and abandon the North's decades-long objective to seek a peaceful Korean unification.

South Korea's military said Monday that it was observing various activities in North Korea that appeared to be preparations for demolishing the roads, such as installing screens.

"They have installed screens on the road and are working behind those screens, preparing to blow up the roads," Lee Sung Joon, spokesperson of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a briefing. He said

the demolitions could be carried out as early as Monday.

Lee said that the South Korean military believes that the North could also attempt to launch a space rocket, which is viewed by the U.N. as a banned test of long-range missile technology. Lee said North Korea may conduct unspecified "small provocations" to ramp up pressure on Seoul.

It's not clear how much parts of the roads North Korea would destroy.

The development comes as North Korea has recently accused South Korea of launching drones to drop propaganda leaflets over Pyongyang three times this month and threatened to respond with force if it happened again. South Korea has refused to confirm whether it sent drones but warned it would sternly punish North Korea if the safety of its citizens is threatened.

In a statement Sunday, the North's Defense Ministry said that the military had ordered artillery and other

army units near the border with South Korea to "get fully ready to open fire." The spokesperson said that the entire South Korean territory "might turn into piles of ashes" following the North's powerful attack.

North Korea often releases warlike rhetoric when animosities with its rivals increase. Experts say it's highly unlikely for North Korea to launch full-scale, preemptive attacks as it military is outmatched by the combined U.S. and South Korean forces.

Koo Byoungsam, a spokesperson of South Korea's Unification Ministry, said Monday that North Korea's accusation on South Korean drone flights was likely aimed at creating tensions to reinforce its internal unity while stoking instability in South Korea. Koo said North Korea cannot win what it wants from South Korea with threats and provocations.

Some observers say anti-Pyongyang activists might have sent drones this month,

but North Korea argues the South Korean government cannot still escape responsibility because it must have been aware of such moves.

In 2022, South Korea sent surveillance drones across the border into North Korea after it accused North Korea of flying drones into South Korea for the first time in five years.

Last week, North Korea said it will permanently block its border with South Korea and build front-line defense structures to cope with "confrontational hysteria" by South Korean and U.S. forces. It cited various military exercises in South Korea and the temporary deployments of powerful U.S. military assets in South Korea.

South Korean officials said North Korea had already been adding anti-tank barriers, planting mines and reinforcing roads on its side of the border since earlier this year in a likely attempt to boost its front-line security posture and prevent its soldiers and citizens from defecting to South Korea.

WORLD BRIEFS

Netanyahu mulls plan to empty northern Gaza of civilians and cut off aid to those left inside

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is examining a plan to seal off humanitarian aid to northern Gaza in an attempt to starve out Hamas militants, a plan that, if implemented, could trap without food or water hundreds of thousands of Palestinians unwilling or unable to leave their homes. Israel has issued many evacuation orders for the north throughout the yearlong war, the most recent of which was Sunday. The plan proposed to Netanyahu and the Israeli parliament by a group of retired generals would escalate the pressure, giving Palestinians a week to leave the northern third of the Gaza Strip, including Gaza City, before declaring it a closed military zone. Those who remain would

be considered combatants—meaning military regulations would allow troops to kill them—and denied food, water, medicine and fuel, according to a copy of the plan given to The Associated Press by its chief architect, who says the plan is the only way to break Hamas in the north and pressure it to release the remaining hostages. The plan calls for Israel to maintain control over the north for an indefinite period to attempt to create a new administration without Hamas, splitting the Gaza Strip in two.

China holds large naval and air force exercises around Taiwan as a warning against independence

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—China held large-scale military exercises surrounding Taiwan and its outlying islands Monday in what it called a warning against Taiwan independence. China's Defense Ministry said the drills were a response to Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te's refusal to concede to Beijing's demands that Taiwan acknowledge itself as a part of the People's Republic of China under the rule of the Communist Party. Taiwan's Defense Ministry called the drills a provocation and said its forces were prepared

to respond. The PLA's Eastern Theater Command spokesperson Navy Senior Captain Li Xi said the navy, army air force, missile corps were all mobilized for the drills. "This is a major warning to those who back Taiwan independence and a signifier of our determination to safeguard our national sovereignty," Li said in a statement on the service's public media channel. Taiwan was a Japanese colony before being unified with China at the end of World War II. It split away in 1949 when Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists fled to the island as Mao Zedong's Communists swept to power on the mainland. Lai took office in May, continuing the eight-year rule of the Democratic Progressive Party that rejects China's demand that it recognize Taiwan is a part of China. China routinely states that Taiwan independence is a "dead end" and that annexation by Beijing is a historical inevitability.

Ukraine's human rights envoy urges response to alleged killings of Ukrainian POWs in Kursk

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukraine's human rights ombudsman urged international organizations Sunday to respond to a claim that several Ukrainian prisoners of war were executed in Russia's Kursk region, where Kyiv had launched an incursion in August. DeepState, a Ukrainian battlefield analysis site close to Ukraine's Defense Ministry, said that Russian troops shot and killed nine Ukrainian "drone operators and contractors" on Oct. 10 after they had surrendered. Dmytro Lubinets said on Telegram that he sent letters to the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross regarding the case, calling it "another crime committed by the Russians."

Later on Sunday, Ukrainian Prosecutor-General Andriy Kostin said that his office had opened a criminal investigation into the matter. Earlier this month, Ukraine's Prosecutor-General's Office of Ukraine said that Russian troops had killed 16 captured Ukrainian soldiers in the partially occupied Donetsk region. There was no immediate response from Russian officials.

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Life & Style

'Terrifier 3' slashes 'Joker' to take No. 1 at the box office, Trump film 'The Apprentice' fizzles

NEW YORK (AP)—The choices on the movie marquee this weekend included Joaquin Phoenix as the Joker, a film about Donald Trump, a “Saturday Night Live” origin story and even Pharrell Williams as a Lego. In the end, all were trounced by an ax-wielding clown.

“Terrifier 3,” a gory, low-budget slasher from the small distributor Cineverse, topped the weekend box office with \$18.3 million, according to estimates Sunday. The film, a sequel to 2022’s “Terrifier 2” (\$15 million worldwide in ticket sales), brings back the



This image released by Cineverse Entertainment shows David Howard Thornton in a scene from “Terrifier 3.”

murderous Art the Clown (David Howard Thornton) and lets him loose, under the guise of Santa, at a Christmas party.

That “Terrifier 3” could notably overperform expectations and leapfrog both major studios and awards hopefuls was only possible due to the disaster of “Joker: Folie à Deux.” After Todd Phillips’ “Joker” sequel, starring Phoenix and Lady Gaga, got off to a much-diminished

start last weekend (and a “D” CinemaScore from audiences), the Warner Bros. release fell a staggering 81% in its second weekend, bringing in just \$7.1 million.

For a superhero film, such a drop has little precedent. Disappointments like “The Marvels,” “The Flash” and “Shazam Fury of the Gods” all managed better second weekends. Such a mass rejection by audiences and crit-

ics is particularly unusually for a follow-up to a massive hit like 2019’s “Joker.” That film, also from Phillips and Phoenix, grossed more than \$1 billion worldwide against a \$60 million budget.

The sequel was pricier, costing about \$200 million to make. That means “Joker: Folie à Deux” is headed for certain box-office disaster. Globally, it’s collected \$165.3 million in ticket sales.

Ariana Grande hosts ‘SNL’ for first time since last female presidential nominee

Ariana Grande took the New York 30 Rock stage at “Saturday Night Live” for the third time as host and found herself in familiar circumstances.

“The last time I hosted was in 2016, and we were right on the verge of electing our first female president,” the 31-year-old singer and actor said in her monologue. “So, I guess, second time’s the charm?”

Grande, who first hosted in 2014, was doing it for the first time without also serving as musical guest—a role that fell to Stevie Nicks—and promised not to sing, before breaking into a song.

The theme continued as she vowed during the tune not to do her signature impressions of Britney Spears, Miley Cyrus and Gwen Stefani, before throwing out a bit of each. She would do a much longer

version of Celine Dion in a sketch later in the show.

Grande hosted in promotion of her movie musical “Wicked,” the “Wizard of Oz” prequel set to be released next month.

She said playing the good witch Glinda as she does in the film is the dream of every theater kid like her, after “losing their virginity.”

Grande’s episode comes amid a ratings spike for the sketch institution, likely brought on by its 50th season, and election season. Last month’s season premiere brought in the most viewers since 2020.

Just as in the first two episodes of the new season, Maya Rudolph played Vice President Kamala Harris in the night’s cold open, leading a group of former cast members returning as guest stars,

including Andy Samberg as Harris’ husband Doug Emhoff and Dana Carvey as President Joe Biden.

They teamed up for an election edition of “The Family Feud,” taking on team Trump.

Kenan Thompson, the longest-tenured cast member in the show’s history who began in 2003, reprised his long-running role as “Feud” host Steve Harvey and asked Rudolph-as-Harris about her recent media blitz.

“It’s been a hell of a week,” she said. “I went on Howard Stern to reach the horny cab drivers, I went on ‘The View’ for the horny moms, and I also went on the podcast ‘Call Her Daddy’ because I have a message for young women: You need to go to the ballot box if you want the government out of your ballot box.”

‘Game of Thrones’ dragon-forged Iron Throne fetches nearly \$1.5 million at auction

“Game of Thrones” fans came out in droves to bid on hundreds of costumes, props and other items from the series in an auction that raked in over \$21 million.

From Thursday through Saturday, the Heritage Auctions event in Dallas featured over 900 lots including suits of armor, swords and weapons, jewelry and several other items of significance from the HBO series.

The top-dollar item was the very thing the characters in the series vied for throughout its eight-season run: the Iron Throne. After a six-minute bidding war, the throne sold for \$1.49 million.

The replica was made of plastic and molded from the original screen-used version, then finished off with metallic paint and jewel embellishments. In the series, the throne was forged with dragon breath that melted the swords of a thousand vanquished challengers and became a symbol of the struggle for power



This combination of images released by Heritage Auctions shows costumes worn by characters from “Game of Thrones,” from left, armor worn by Gregor “The Mountain” Clegane, Jon Snow’s Night’s Watch ensemble, and Jaime Lannister’s full Kingsguard armor.

throughout the show’s run.

Heritage Auctions said in a statement Sunday that the event brought in \$21.1 million from more than 4,500 bidders. The auction marked Heritage’s second-best entertainment event, just shy of the record set by a Debbie Reynolds sale it held in 2011.

Heritage Executive Vice President Joe Maddalena said in a statement he knew the

auction would resonate.

“These are extraordinary treasures made by Emmy-winning costume designers and prop makers, who worked tirelessly to adapt George R.R. Martin’s wonderful novels,” Maddalena said. “People wanted a piece of that ‘Game of Thrones’ magic.”

Beyond the coveted Iron Throne, over 30 other lots commanded six-figure price tags.

Married woman tempted to become a mistress

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for 12 years. Things were good in the beginning. However, many times he has let me down by not helping with bills, stress, etc. He recently lost a job, which has added to my stress because we now have a child.

I have been communicating with an old work friend who makes me feel like we would be great together. He’s married, too, but we are both unhappy in our marriages. He wants me to relocate and be with him, but although I can see us together, I’m not sure I want to move to where he lives. Although he has admitted he’s unhappy, he never mentions he wants a divorce. He has said only that he wants us to be together.

I’m torn, Abby. Do I stay in an unhappy marriage for the sake of my child, or divorce and relocate, hoping everything will work out? Please help me to settle my mind, heart and thoughts.

TROUBLED IN TEXAS

DEAR TROUBLED: From what you have written, it appears that while your “old work friend” may be unhappy in his marriage, he has NO plans to divorce his wife although he would like you to dump your husband, uproot your and your child’s lives and be more geographically convenient -- for HIM. Following this road map, hoping everything

will work out with no guarantee about stability for you and your child, could end in disaster. Please take your head out of the clouds and start thinking strategically and rationally. Right now, you are doing neither.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I enjoy my job and have good compensation and benefits. I am lucky to work for a progressive, flexible company. However, the atmosphere in our office is very isolating. My boss is kind and supportive, but overall, I don’t feel much support or kindness from my co-workers. Most of them are in their 30s and from upper-middle-class backgrounds. I am not, and I’m in my early 60s.

People in my workplace are very cliquish. They do not invite me into their activities or interactions. If I make a comment, I’m often ignored. I have tried hard to be friendly but don’t get much response. I can look people in the eye and smile, yet most won’t say hello unless I do first. This is very depressing. I need advice.

OVERLOOKED IN OREGON

DEAR OVERLOOKED: Because the reception you receive from your co-workers is unwelcoming (to say the least), my first suggestion would be that you concentrate more on the positive aspects of your employment—namely

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



the salary and benefits—and less about making friends. Decide how many more years you want to work and ride it out until you plan to retire. My second is simply to seek employment elsewhere if the isolation becomes too much for you, and explain the reason for your departure to your boss during your exit interview.

■■■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order “How to Have a Lovely Wedding.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

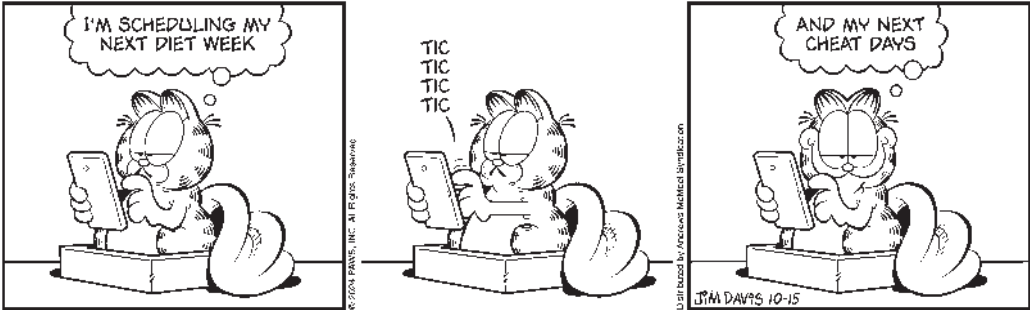
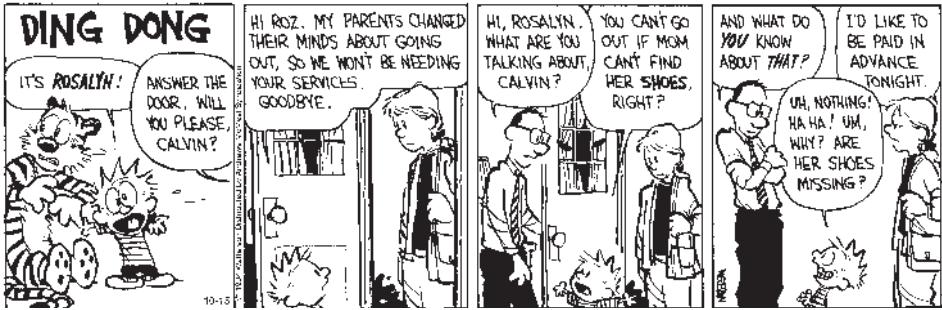
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

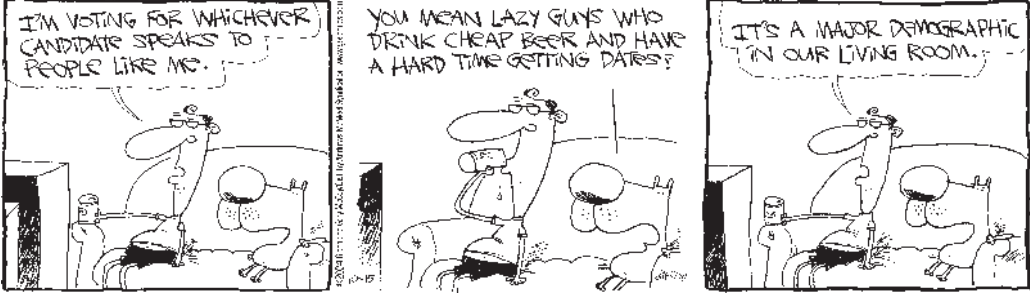
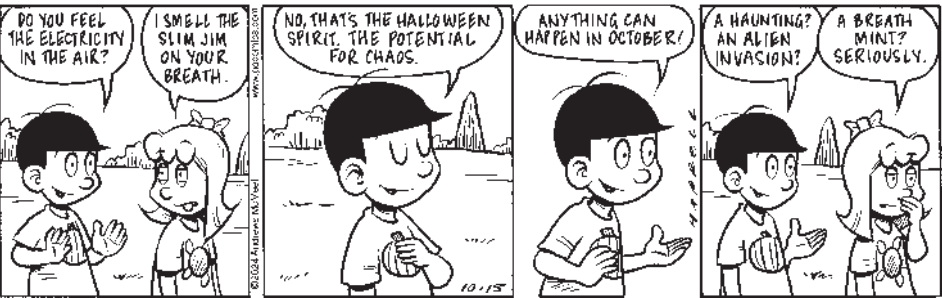


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 37 Dessert 38 Natural gift 41 Press for payment 42 Concept 43 Dante's love 48 Byway 49 Sphere 50 Galley supply 51 Catch sight of 52 Ballot markings 53 Flightless birds

DOWN 1 Corn seasoning 5 Invoice fig. 8 Shredded cabbage dish 12 Coffin stand 13 Fan's cry 14 Casual shirt 15 Ruse 17 Castle 18 Passing craze 19 Jots down 21 Grown-up 24 Subsequently 25 Richard of "Chicago" 26 Lawyer's business 30 Docs' org. 31 — Ste. Marie 32 Chap 33 Start of summer or winter 35 Simple 36 Melody

2 Vacuum's lack 3 Allow 4 Tiny amount 5 Desertlike 6 PC alternative 7 2022 film starring Brendan Fraser 8 Quick run 9 Booty 10 Lip balm ingredient 11 Stir-fry pans 16 — Tuesday 20 Geom. shape 21 Turkish officials 22 Trial version 23 Caspian Sea feeder 24 Disarming event? 26 Container for art supplies 27 Disney exec 28 Brusque 29 Checks out 31 Dazzle 34 Firm 35 Fifth president 37 Impose 38 Ersatz swing 39 Big fusses 40 Vault 41 Ointment amounts 44 Before 45 "— Spartacus!" 46 French vineyard 47 Spiritual leader?

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 10-15

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dominic West, 55; Vanessa Marcil, 56; Emeril Lagasse, 65; Sarah Ferguson, 65.

Happy Birthday: Expand your mind, look for opportunities and make things happen. Sitting idle and waiting for things to come to you will lead to frustration. Step outside your comfort zone, and let your creative imagination initiate innovative ideas. A change that encourages a better lifestyle, a health and fitness routine, and budgeting for something you want to pursue will be uplifting. Personal gain is heading your way. Your numbers are 6, 10, 19, 26, 32, 38, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keep secrets to yourself. Observe what others do and say without comment. The less others know about you, the better. Flying under the radar will help you achieve what you set out to do without interference. Listen to your body and address health issues with hope and vision.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You are overdue for a change. Consider what's missing in your life or how you can harness something you enjoy and build it into your daily routine. Let your imagination and thoughts lead the way, and you'll discover a path that makes you feel good about your life.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Refuse to let anyone manipulate you. Change must come from the heart and have meaning for you. Letting someone talk you into something you don't need or want will weigh heavily on you if you are a pushover. It's up to you to create your desired opportunities.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Consider and develop ideas and skills that excite you. Doing something you love or that has meaning to you will change the atmosphere and how you use your time to get ahead. Refuse

to let someone's mixed emotions mess with doing what's best for you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be careful with whom you align yourself. Someone will offer misleading information or make a last-minute adjustment that doesn't favor you. Do your research and be ready to state facts. Protect your position, reputation and health from anyone or anything that may be toxic.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Keep life and explanations simple. Don't underestimate anyone or anything. Keep your finger on the pulse and your head in the game. Recognize what's real and what's conjecture. An opportunity is only valuable if it works for you. Create situations that address what's important to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Keep an open mind when dealing with associates, business opportunities and healthy living. Refuse to let frustration and anger surface when there are better ways to use your energy. Hard work will pay off and encourage you to use your experience, knowledge and skills to accommodate current trends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Strut your stuff, do your thing and make a splash that embeds what you have to offer into the minds of those you encounter. Go all out, express and articulate your thoughts and position, and you'll mesmerize someone who has as much to contribute as you do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stop, look and listen. Protect your position, popularity and property from anyone trying to make you look bad. Walk away from people who play emotional mind games or try to control what you do or think. You'll get the best results working toward your goal alone.

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You're in a better position than you realize. Pump up your stamina and aim to get things done. High energy, vision and charisma will help you raise awareness and attract qualified individuals to help you reach your objective. Leave nothing to chance, get the facts and follow through.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take your time. Premature changes will turn out differently than you anticipate. Be open to suggestions, break down costs and make decisions based on facts, figures and binding contracts. Play it safe; don't risk financial loss, injury or impaired health. Abide by the rules and regulations.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take control and do things your way. Put your energy behind your word and use discipline to finish what you start. An innovative approach to using your attributes will help you bring about positive change and attract and connect you to someone special. Romance is favored.

Birthday Baby: You are insightful, creative and proactive. You are energetic and persistent.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

Difficulty: ★★ 10/15

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

HAVE ANY TREASURE TODAY? Solution: 6 letters

C P U D D I N G N I L P M U D A L I Q U I D S N E D L O G R R O A H O N E Y R E K A B I I A A T S U R C R C P E C A N Z M F L T S E Z U I Y E O O G Z E G E N P I A P T C B O D E L L N M I I S C C E O H S E R E E I A F C F I D I L B R M B E D N P F E T A L E M F A B A R D A I L U A L A M U S E J E E A N F E M A E O R E T S A T A M I E O M M N C O O K I E S D E R R R T A R T M I X T U R E M A A A E N I O L R E D N E T O M O L A S S E S Y A D I L O H

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Aromatic, Bakery, Boil, Caramel, Classic, Cookies, Crumbs, Crust, Dessert, Drizzle, Dumpling, Gingerbread, Golden, Goopy, Holidays, Homemade, Honey, Jars, Lemon, Liquid, Loaf, Maple, Marinade, Marmalade, Melt, Mixture, Molasses, Muffin, Oatmeal, Pecan, Pudding, Refining, Rich, Sauce, Spice, Steamed, Syrup, Tart, Taste, Tenderloin, Zest

Yesterday's Answer: Cobblestones

For WONDERWORD apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367.

Jerry West becomes first three-time Hall of Fame inductee

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP)—The stage was filled with Laker greats when Jerry West made history Sunday night by becoming the first three-time inductee to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

When one of them had his turn to speak, he could barely get the words out trying to say what West meant to him.

"He's a friend and a mentor, and I owe him more than he could ever understand," Michael Cooper said while choking back tears.

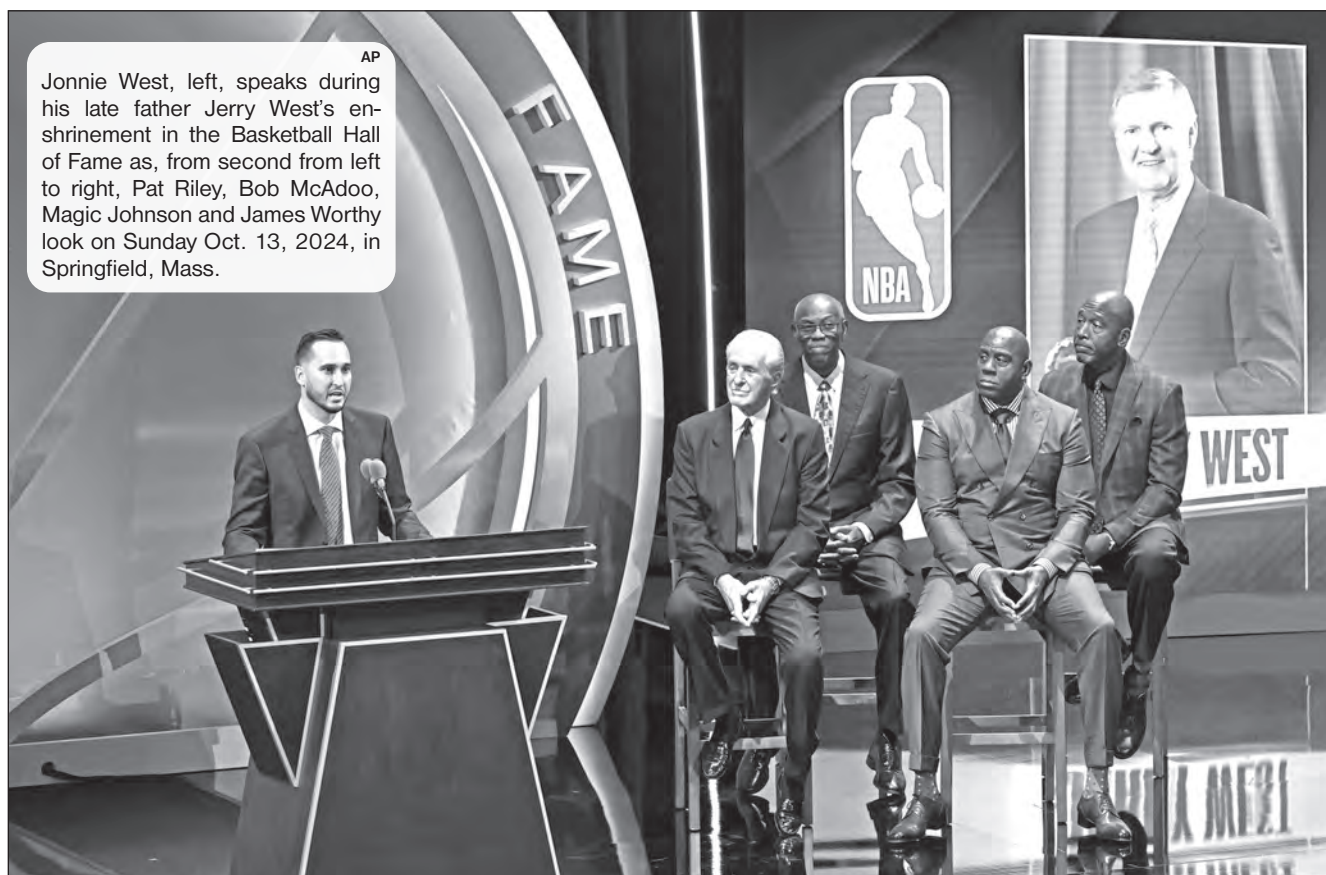
No wonder Jonnie West said of his father, who died in June at 86: "Jerry West was beloved by pretty much everyone in basketball."

Cooper was enshrined as part of the 13-member class led by Vince Carter and Chauncey Billups. Carter is the only player to appear in four decades and his 22 seasons are an NBA record.

Even as he prepared to call it quits in 2020 at 43, Carter was having trouble using the word "retire." That changed, he said, after a conversation with Kobe Bryant during his final season in which Bryant assured him that life after playing was wonderful. Shortly after, Carter came to terms saying he was retiring.

"Because Kobe Bryant allowed me to see it was OK," Carter said.

The class also included



high-scoring Phoenix star Walter Davis and former Knicks champion Dick Barnett, with Seimone Augustus and Michele Timms making it from the WNBA. Doug Collins and Pacers owner Herb Simon were inducted as contributors, along with amateur-level coaches Bo Ryan, Harley Redin and Charles Smith.

This honor for West was for his work as a contributor, largely recognizing the eight championships he helped the

Lakers win as an executive.

"Contributor to the game of basketball, that is you in every single sense and that will live on forever," Jonnie West said, with Lakers Hall of Famers such as Magic Johnson and James Worthy joining Cooper, with coach Pat Riley nearby.

West had already been inducted for his playing career with the Lakers that began in 1960, and then again in 2010 as a member of the 1960 U.S. team that won an Olympic

gold medal at the very start of one of basketball's most unparalleled careers.

"The Logo. The icon of our game," said Cooper, who had Riley and Johnson back on stage chanting "Coop!" along with fans when he returned for his own enshrinement.

West loved to find players for the Lakers and mentor them once they were, from a No. 60 pick and defensive specialist out of New Mexico like Cooper, to a high school

teenager like Bryant.

Boosted by West's acquisition of Shaquille O'Neal in 1996, the Lakers won three straight championships from 2000-02. Billups led the Detroit Pistons to an upset of the Lakers in the 2004 NBA Finals and was voted series MVP as the point guard on a team that included Ben Wallace, Rasheed Wallace, Richard Hamilton and Tayshaun Prince.

"We affectionately called ourselves the best five alive

and nobody was going to tell us any different," Billups said.

Billups had a rough start to his career, lasting just half a season in Boston before the Celtics traded the No. 3 pick in the 1997 draft. He didn't last much longer in Toronto or Denver but eventually found his spot in Detroit, where the No. 1 jersey of the player nicknamed "Mr. Big Shot" hangs in the rafters.

"I never thought I needed a second home but in Detroit I have one," Billups said.

Carter ended up with plenty in his career, which he said included 261 teammates. It started as the high-flying phenom in Toronto in 1999, where he joined his cousin and now fellow Hall of Famer, Tracy McGrady. It was only shortly before that they learned they were related, and Carter said when McGrady called to tell him that news, he said: "Cuz, I'm going to make sure the Raptors draft you. I got you."

"Here we are today," Carter added.

His dunks, whether in Slam Dunk contests, Olympics or just regular-season games, made Carter must-see TV early in his career. He relished remaining a productive player many teams and many years later, when he was no longer quite the high flyer.

He thanked the fans who watched him for all the years, both the ones who cheered and the ones who booed.

"Man, it's been an honor to fly in arenas for your entertainment," Carter said.

Carter played only a short time in Canada. His impact on Canadian basketball still goes strong

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP)—Even though Vince Carter played only a short time in Canada, his impact on Canadian basketball is still going strong.

Those kids who watched him play in Toronto, who dreamed of wearing a jersey with a dinosaur on their chest, who maybe didn't realize yet that no matter how hard they practiced at school or in the park would never dunk like Carter, are all grown up now.

They have made Canada's national team one of the best in the world, the best it's ever been, and many of them point to the new Hall of Famer as the reason they picked the sport that was never No. 1 in their country.

"Everybody that really plays basketball in this country knows who Vince Carter is," Raptors forward RJ Barrett said. "What he's done for the game is huge."

With 2024 NBA MVP runner-up Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and 2023 NBA champion Jamal Murray leading the way, Canada had 10 NBA players on its roster in the Olympics, the most of any country other than the U.S.

Carter spent the first 6 1/2 of his NBA-record 22 seasons with the Raptors. He was the 1999 Rookie of the Year in his first season and an All-Star and the Slam Dunk champion in his second, when Toronto made the playoffs for the first time.

He also won a gold medal during the summer of 2000, when his dunk over France's Frederic Weis became one of the biggest highlights in Olympic basketball history, and a U.S. team with NBA players had still never been beaten.

Fast forward to last year, when Canada not only won bronze for its first men's basketball medal in the World Cup of Basketball, but did it by beating the U.S. in the third-place game.

The Canadians had gone from watching Carter play to playing like Carter.

"You're seeing a lot of kids—I was one of them—who went into their backyards and tried to emulate what he did on the court," said Kelly Olynyk, who also plays for the Raptors. "That effect is huge."

The NBA was no sure thing to succeed in Canada, where hockey is king, when the Raptors began play as an expan-



Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2024 inductee Vince Carter gestures during a hall of fame news conference at Mohegan Sun, Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, in Uncasville, Conn.

sion team in 1995. In fact, the Vancouver Grizzlies, the other team to debut that season, lasted only six seasons north of the border before moving to Memphis.

But after three straight losing seasons to begin their existence, the Raptors acquired the rights to Carter at the 1998 NBA draft. They finished just four games under .500 in his first season,

then reached the playoffs for the first time in his second.

Carter looks back at his time in Toronto, where he had veterans such as Charles Oakley as teammates, as the place he learned the habits that would help him become the only player in NBA history to play in four decades.

"I had a great support system. I had veterans and I was

willing to ask questions," Carter said Saturday at a news conference to discuss his induction Sunday into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. "I was willing to ask questions because I wanted to learn."

Many of the core players on the Canadian team that reached the quarterfinals in Paris were too young to re-

member watching Carter, though players who were in the NBA earlier such as Olynyk, Tristan Thompson and Cory Joseph may have.

"A lot of my friends and even some older people, we wanted to play basketball so much because of the Raptors and Vince and the excitement it brought," Olynyk said. "Now you're seeing that my age group now have kids, and they're putting their kids into basketball because they were basketball fans. Now the whole effect is multigenerational."

Though there was anger from the Raptors and their fans toward Carter after he pushed to be traded, things have been soothed now. The team will retire his jersey this season and recently unveiled a revitalized Vince Carter Court at a park in Toronto.

"I think it's really special, very special for him that he's going to be honored in the Hall of Fame," said Nets coach Jordi Fernandez, who coached Canada's national team, "and very special for Canadian basketball that they could enjoy such a great player and watch him play in the NBA for a long time."

Henry runs for 2 TDs, Jackson throws for 323 yards as Ravens beat Commanders



BALTIMORE

(AP)—Lamar Jackson threw for 323 yards and a touchdown to outshine rookie Jayden Daniels in a showdown between two of the NFL's best quarterbacks this season. Derrick Henry ran for two TDs and the Baltimore Ravens beat the Washington Commanders 30-23 on Sunday for their fourth consecutive victory.

Jackson found Mark Andrews for the tight end's first touchdown of the season and completed nine passes to Zay Flowers for 132 yards—all in the first half. Henry had 132 yards and his NFL-leading eighth and ninth TDs as the Ravens (4-2) mixed and matched the pass and run to near perfection.

Daniels connected with Terry McLaurin on two TD passes, but did not get nearly enough help from the backfield in a matchup of the two top rushing offenses in the league. With Brian Robinson Jr. out because of a knee injury, Washington (4-2) got just 52 yards on the ground.

The Commanders' defense struggled to contain Jackson and Henry, allowing Baltimore to rack up 484 yards, and their winning streak ended at four with a loss at the hands of an opponent that is starting to look like the legitimate Super Bowl contender it was expected to be.

BEARS 35, JAGUARS 16

LONDON (AP)—Caleb Williams threw four touchdown passes—two each to receiver Keenan Allen and tight end Cole Kmet—and Chicago held a tea party celebration in the end zone in a rout of Jacksonville at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London.

Along with the rookie quarterback's big day, Kmet chipped in by handling emergency long-snapping duties as the Bears (4-2) won their third straight game for the first time in nearly four years.

Allen led a tea party celebration after his 9-yard touchdown reception in the third quarter and his second score gave Chicago a 28-10 early in the fourth. D'Andre Swift added a 1-yard plunge for the Bears.

The Jags (1-5) started fast but Gabe Davis dropped a pass in the end zone—after he was whistled for a false start—and Jacksonville settled for a field goal on its opening drive.

EAGLES 20, BROWNS 16

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Jalen Hurts threw for 264



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson throws during the first half of an NFL football game against the Washington Commanders Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024, in Baltimore.

yards and two touchdowns, including a go-ahead 45-yard toss to DeVonta Smith in the fourth quarter, and Philadelphia held off Cleveland.

Hurts also threw a 22-yard TD to A.J. Brown, who returned along with Smith after both wide receivers missed time with injuries. The Eagles can't afford to lose either for any more lengthy stretches if they want to make a deep post-season run.

Coming off a bye, the already maddening Eagles (3-2) had to tough one out against the Browns (1-5) in front of a mostly listless crowd. Before Smith's TD, Eagles fans only showed some fire when they chanted for coach Nick Sirianni to get fired.

Trailing 20-13, the Browns moved into Eagles territory late in the game, only to settle for Dustin Hopkins' 31-yard field goal. Deshaun Watson was pushed out of bounds at the 2-yard line on a scramble, and he threw incomplete on third down.

COLTS 20, TITANS 17

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Joe Flacco threw for 189 yards and two touchdowns, leading Indianapolis to a win over Tennessee.

The veteran now is 1-1 in his second straight start for the Colts (3-3) who got a much-needed split of back-to-back road games inside the AFC South with second-year quarterback Anthony Richardson scratched again with an injured right hip.

Richardson, the fourth overall pick out of Florida in 2023, has yet to play against Will Levis who was the 33rd selection overall in the same draft by Tennessee. The battered Colts with nine on injured reserve also had 2021 NFL rushing champ Jonathan Taylor out for a second straight game.

The Titans (1-4) now have lost three straight to their di-

vision rival. They will have to wait until November to try and win their first home game this season for first-year coach Brian Callahan.

PACKERS 34, CARDINALS 13

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Romeo Doubs returned from a one-game suspension and caught two of Jordan Love's four touchdown passes in Green Bay's victory over mistake-prone Arizona.

Doubs scored his first two touchdowns of the season—a 10-yard score to open the second quarter and a 20-yard reception in the third quarter. Doubs, who caught three passes for 49 yards, missed the Packers' 24-19 win over the Los Angeles Rams for conduct detrimental to the team after missing two practices.

Love also threw touchdown passes of 5 yards to Jayden Reed and 44 yards to Christian Watson while going 22 of 32—completing throws to nine players—for 258 yards with one interception. His four touchdown passes matched a career high.

The Packers (4-2) capitalized on the Cardinals' uncharacteristic lack of discipline. The Cardinals had been averaging a league-low 3.8 penalties per game, but they were penalized 13 times for 100 yards Sunday. They also committed three turnovers.

TEXANS 41, PATRIOTS 21

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—C.J. Stroud threw three touchdown passes and Houston spoiled the first start of rookie New England quarterback Drake Maye, breezing past the Patriots.

Joe Mixon rushed for 102 yards and caught a TD pass from Stroud. Stefon Diggs had six catches for 77 yards and a score for the AFC South-leading Texans (5-1), and Tank Dell had seven receptions for

57 yards and a TD.

Dameon Pierce ripped off a 54-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter and finished with 76 yards on eight carries. Will Anderson Jr. recorded three sacks for Houston, which has won three straight.

The Patriots (1-5) got a boost from Maye, the No. 3 overall pick in the NFL draft. Taking over for veteran Jacoby Brissett, he finished 20 of 33 for 243 yards and three touchdowns. He also ran for 38 yards but was intercepted twice and sacked four times, one resulting in a lost fumble.

BUCCANEERS 51, SAINTS 27

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Baker Mayfield overcame three turnovers with 325 yards and four touchdowns passing, and Tampa Bay defeated New Orleans in what they hoped would be a morale boost to their many fans who endured Hurricane Milton earlier in the week.

The result blemished rookie quarterback Spencer Rattler's first NFL start for New Orleans, which has lost four straight after opening the season with a pair of lopsided victories.

Trailing by three after a wild, high-scoring first half in which Tampa Bay (4-2) lost an early 17-0 lead, the Bucs pulled ahead for good on Godwin's second touchdown of the game—a 55-yarder on a short catch and long run during which three Saints missed tackle attempts.

Safety Zyon McCollum's diving interception of Rattler's underthrown pass initiated a fourth-quarter drive that ended with Mayfield's 8-yard scoring pass to tight end Cade Otton on third-and-goal as Tampa Bay continued to pull away.

CHARGERS 23, BRONCOS 16

DENVER (AP)—Justin

Herbert directed a clock-chewing, methodical Los Angeles Chargers offense that capitalized on the departure of star cornerback Patrick Surtain II to beat Denver.

Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh missed the start of the game while being evaluated by medical personnel, but returned to the sideline in the first quarter and coached the remainder of the game. He told a CBS sideline reporter he was dealing with a heart arrhythmia.

The Chargers (3-2) looked for much of the afternoon as though they'd hand the Broncos (3-3) their first home shut-out in their 65-year history. But after two turnovers and five punts, Bo Nix directed the Broncos on a 95-yard scoring drive capped by his 2-yard pass to fellow Oregon alum Troy Franklin early in the fourth quarter.

Then, Courtland Sutton made a diving 15-yard TD grab with 5:22 remaining, but a failed 2-point try left the double-digit deficit in place. The Broncos reached the Chargers 32 on their next possession and Wil Lutz's 40-yard field goal on first down made it 23-16 with 59 seconds left.

STEELERS 32, RAIDERS 13

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Najee Harris finally found his form after a slow start to the season, rushing for 106 yards and a touchdown Sunday to lift Pittsburgh to a victory over Las Vegas.

Harris exceeded 100 yards for the first time since ending last season with back-to-back such performances. He rushed for 1,000 yards in each of his first three seasons but entered this game averaging 3.3 yards per carry this year.

Quarterback Justin Fields added 59 yards on the ground and two TDs, though he passed for just 145 yards. Fields' hold on the starting job had come into question after recent subpar performances and with Russell Wilson being activated for the first time this season after being out with a calf injury.

Pittsburgh (4-2) stopped a two-game skid with its highest-scoring game since beating Cincinnati 34-11 last Dec. 23. The Steelers entered ranked 26th in scoring offense, with an 18.4-point average.

FALCONS 38, PANTHERS 20

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Bijan Robinson ran for 95 yards and two touchdowns, Tyler Allgeier added 105 yards rushing and a score and Atlanta defeated Carolina for their third win over an NFC

South foe in three weeks.

Kirk Cousins completed 19 of 30 passes for 225 yards and threw a 3-yard touchdown pass to Drake London.

Carolina's Andy Dalton finished 26 of 38 for 221 yards with two touchdowns passes and two fourth-quarter interceptions for the Panthers (1-5), who have lost three straight.

The Panthers trailed 28-20 early in the fourth quarter and were moving the ball effectively on the ground with Chuba Hubbard picking up three first downs before Dalton took a shot downfield and was intercepted by A.J. Terrell.

LIONS 47, COWBOYS 9

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Jared Goff threw for 315 yards and three touchdowns after his completion streak ended on his first throw, and Detroit blew out Dallas, handing the Cowboys a fourth consecutive lopsided loss at home.

David Montgomery had two rushing TDs for the Lions (4-1), who lost pass rusher Aidan Hutchinson to a serious injury to his lower left leg in the third quarter.

Dak Prescott threw two interceptions in the worst home loss since 1988 for the Cowboys (3-3), who became the first team since at least 2000 to trail by 14 or more more points at halftime in four consecutive games on their home field. Dallas is 0-3 at home and 3-0 on the road.

BENGALS 17, GIANTS 7

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Joe Burrow scored on a career-long 47-yard run on the opening possession, and Cincinnati's defense carried them to a much-needed victory over New York.

Evan McPherson made a go-ahead 37-yard field goal in the third quarter after a botched snap and hold contributed to him missing a potential game-winning kick a week earlier. And Chase Brown scored on a 30-yard run with 1:52 to play—one play after he fumbled and the ball rolled out of bounds—to give the Bengals (2-4) some hope after a dismal start.

Rookie Tyrone Tracy ran for a 1-yard touchdown for the Giants (2-4), who are winless are home in three games and have one scored one touchdown. They failed to take advantage of a Bengals defense that came in ranked 31st in the league in scoring.

The Giants punted four times in the first half. In the second, they turned it over on downs twice and Greg Joseph missed two field goal attempts.

Dodgers top Mets 9-0 in NLCS opener

LOS ANGELES (AP)—After spending the first seven years of his big league career back East, Jack Flaherty came home. He joined a winning team in the Los Angeles Dodgers and helped make a bit of playoff history.

Flaherty combined on a three-hitter and Los Angeles Dodgers pitchers tied the postseason record of 33 consecutive scoreless innings by routing the New York Mets 9-0 Sunday night in the NL Championship Series opener.

“I saw some family out there when I was warming up and I had gone to games here with them before, so it just kind of lets you relax a little bit,” he said. “Felt I tried to do too much the last couple times out in some big games. Just al-

lowed me to be myself and just go out and pitch and trust my stuff and trust the guys behind me.”

Los Angeles knocked out a wild Kodai Senga in the second inning, built a six-run lead by the fourth and matched the scoreless record set by

» Tie postseason mark of 33 straight scoreless inning

Baltimore Orioles pitchers over the first four games of the 1966 World Series against the Dodgers.

Backed by chants of “MVP! MVP!” Shohei Ohtani was 2 for 4 with a walk while scoring two runs and driving in another.

Mookie Betts added a three-run double in the eighth in the largest shutout victory margin in Dodgers postseason history, also the Mets’ most one-sided

postseason shutout defeat.

“Our energy all started with Jack,” Betts said. “Jack really gave it to us today.”

Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Monday afternoon.

Flaherty allowed two hits over seven innings in the Dodgers’ first scoreless postseason start of seven-plus innings since Clayton Kershaw’s eight innings in the 2020 NL Wild Card Series.

“It was just a pitching clinic,” Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. “I thought he did a great job of filling up the strike zone with his complete mix. Once we caught a lead, he did a great job of just going after those guys and attacking. For us to get seven innings in a long series was huge.”

Flaherty left to a standing ovation from the sellout crowd of 53,503.



Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Jack Flaherty, left, is greeted by Shohei Ohtani as he returns to the dugout during the seventh inning in Game 1 of a baseball NL Championship Series against the New York Mets, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024, in Los Angeles.

The 28-year-old right-hander from nearby Burbank returned home from Detroit at the July 30 trade deadline and has been a steadying presence in a rotation hard-hit by injuries.

“He’s got an aura about him,” Dodgers catcher Will Smith said. “He’s super competitive, super focused.”

Flaherty got a hug from Roberts and then the pitcher hugged his mother who sat behind home plate. Some of his buddies from their Little League days in the San Fernando Valley were on hand, too.

SAIPAN

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ten division; Reiden Travilla in the light-featherweight class of the Gray White Belt Pre-Teen division; James Garcia in the middleweight class of the Adult White Belt division; Jesus Attao in the medium heavyweight class of the Adult Blue Belt division; and Bryan Deleon Guerrero in the featherweight class of the Adult Black Belt division. The 10th competitor was Joaquin Salas who competed in the middleweight class of the Adult White Belt division.

Deleon Guerrero, instructor at the academy in Chalan Kanoa, praised both his young and adult wards alike for their performance.

He said the children, who he calls the “spark” of the team, did great. “Ultimately my goal was to give them more exposure to the competition scene and challenge high level competitors. Three of the four of them had previous off island competition experience, which showed

in their matches. I wanted to use this competition as a chance for them to execute what we’ve been working on in the training room. They did that very well while displaying tremendous heart and excellent sportsmanship. I’m extremely proud of our kids...”

As for the adult competitors, who he calls the “driving force” of their competition team, did great as well. “Each competitor handled their matches with great composure and skill. Each of them won multiple matches and got their hand raised, which speaks volumes of the hard work they’ve been putting in the training room. Two competitors, James and Troy, entered a competition for the first time. James, having only trained for three months, since our opening, won several matches and secured bronze. While Troy competed in two divisions and brought home gold and bronze.”

He added, “Everyone displayed a good level of technical skill and executed moves we have been working on in the academy. My goal as a coach is to equip them with tech-

nique that I know they’ll need while in their matches. The goal is also to determine what moves need to be re-emphasized and identify areas that need improvement.”

Even with their expansive medal haul, Deleon Guerrero said it’s not just all about the medals. “It’s about their self-improvement. I’ve seen each individual come into the academy and put their hours in on the mats. Challenging themselves in every way possible to make them a better martial artist. That, to me, is the ultimate reward. I am blessed to have them under my mentorship and out there with me representing our island.”

As for his matches, he competed for the first time in the black belt Adult Featherweight division. He said of that competition, “My competitor was a seasoned black belt who is very active in the competition scene in Asia. He was a tough competitor and defeated me by points. Having been recently promoted, I know that I’ll be going up against guys who have been black belts for many years.

WETTZ

From page 16

followed by another by C.J. Lizama. Then back-to-back errors on the field allowed two runs to score, plus three more runs to give Wettz the lead, 5-2.

There was no holding back from there with Wettz adding six more runs in the next inning. The Babes came up empty until the last inning when they added one, but it was too little too late after Wettz added four more for the 15-3 final.

In the first game of the day, Man Amigas also won their second win in as many games over Dirty Diamonds, 15-2.

The Dirty Diamonds got to work early from a single by Amy Cabrera and a double by Rachel Salalila. They both made their way home from Lizann Deleon Guerrero’s single for a 2-0 lead. But that was all the offense they provided in that game.

The Amigas retaliated right away in their at-bat as they scored four consecutive runs off of Jaylina Borja, Jahsmine Ramon, Anu Aldan, and Bex Repeki to overtake the lead, 4-2.

I know the new division was going to be a big challenge, but nonetheless, “a pendulum will always swing back.” I’ll trust the process and keep working hard like I always do. I’m excited for the next event.”

Deleon Guerrero then gave thanks to their sponsors and supporters. “Being a young gym, it is heartwarming to know that many people are supporting and rooting for us. On behalf of the Saipan Submissions Competition Team, we’d like to thank all our sponsors and everyone who supported us. This wouldn’t have been possible without you!”

The Marianas Open was the grand finale in the 2024 Marianas Pro Series. It began with the Copa De Marianas Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Gi/No-Gi Tournament last February; then the Marianas Pro Japan last March; the Marianas Pro Philippines last April; and the Marianas Pro Korea last June.

This last tournament in Guam featured over 750 martial artists from around the world and had the largest turnout in history.

From there, Man Amigas’ pitching proceeded to shut down the Dirty Diamonds as their hurler Evita Maratita struck out the side in the second inning. She added three more strikeouts and allowed just two more hits and two walks.

Maratita was then backed up more by her offense as 11 runs scored in the third. The game was then called off on run-mercy ruling with a 15-2 final.

Then, the Batties doubled the Lady Blue Jays’ runs to win their first game, 6-3. No last names were provided for the Batties’ roster.

The Batties’ Angel led things off with an inside the park homer to get them on board first at the start of the game. Kona and Keina then added two in the third to lead, 3-0. Iggy then added one in the fourth for a 4-0 game.

The Lady Blue Jays’ Patty Mendiola and Kiana Camacho finally found home plate to cut the lead by two, 2-3 at the bottom of the fourth. But the Batties went on to score two more runs in the fifth, while the Lady Blue Jays bats produced just one more run at the bottom of the inning, for the eventual 3-6 final score.

SANTOS

From page 16

motivated this season. In the championships, he was behind a runner after the first lap, but picked up the pace and left everyone in his dust in the second and final lap.

On his championship win and sweep of the whole season, he said, “I feel good. I want to thank Jesus Christ because he helped me. I woke up every day to train and grind, but I wouldn’t have done this without him.”

With his exceptional sweep of all the cross-country qualifiers, he said he felt a lot of pressure to win the championships. “I felt a lot of pressure on me after winning all the qualifiers, but in the end, it helped me because I didn’t want to lose. I’ll only get better from here,” said Santos.

After he made his way back to running again after a disappointing performance in the all-schools track and field event last school year that demotivated him, he said, “I found my way again and I’m just glad to be here.”

Last cross-country season, he fin-

ished third in the championships and was happy with that. This season, he pushed for gold because he said he wouldn’t have been happy and satisfied with anything less.

As for the girls division, there’s a new champion this year.

Up-and-coming runner and high school freshman Taflinger, who bagged three out of four qualifiers, finished her golden run at 23:29. ACS’ Sablina Shen was silver at 23:53, while Mary Zhu was bronze at 25:02.

The 14-year-old was the fastest girl this year as last year’s champion, schoolmate Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez, did not compete after the second qualifier due to an injury. With that, Taflinger said she wished Chavez was there because it was her last year who pushed me to do better.”

As for the course, Taflinger said, “It was good. It was really slippery and there were small hills, but my team and I had been training on hills and different terrains.”

Results of the middle school and elementary school divisions will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES						
NFL STANDINGS						
AMERICAN CONFERENCE						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	3	2	0	.600	142	106
Miami	2	3	0	.400	60	113
N.Y. Jets	2	3	0	.400	93	85
New England	1	5	0	.167	83	143
South						
Houston	5	1	0	.833	143	135
Indianapolis	3	3	0	.500	139	139
Tennessee	1	4	0	.200	96	110
Jacksonville	1	5	0	.167	113	178
North						
Baltimore	4	2	0	.667	177	149
Pittsburgh	4	2	0	.667	124	86
Cincinnati	2	4	0	.333	157	152
Cleveland	1	5	0	.167	95	141
West						
Kansas City	5	0	0	1.000	118	85
L.A. Chargers	3	2	0	.600	91	66
Denver	3	3	0	.500	112	96
Las Vegas	2	4	0	.333	109	163
NATIONAL CONFERENCE						
East						
Washington	4	2	0	.667	178	145
Philadelphia	3	2	0	.600	106	112
Dallas	3	3	0	.500	126	168
N.Y. Giants	2	4	0	.333	96	121
South						
Atlanta	4	2	0	.667	149	135
Tampa Bay	4	2	0	.667	178	141
New Orleans	2	4	0	.333	167	147
Carolina	1	5	0	.167	103	203
North						
Minnesota	5	0	0	1.000	139	76
Detroit	4	1	0	.800	151	91
Chicago	4	2	0	.667	148	101
Green Bay	4	2	0	.667	162	121
West						
San Francisco	3	3	0	.500	162	130
Seattle	3	3	0	.500	146	150
Arizona	2	4	0	.333	133	163
L.A. Rams	1	4	0	.200	94	139

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Jerry West becomes first three-time inductee
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Dodgers top Mets 9-0 in NLCS opener
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Santos, Taflinger golden in x-country



LEIGH GASES

Boys high school cross-country champion, Saipan International School's Victor Nash Santos, celebrates as he runs toward the finish line of the PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 championships at the Saipan Vegas Country Club last Saturday morning.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The fastest qualified cross-country runners took to the last course of the PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025—the championships at the Saipan Vegas Country Club



LEIGH GASES

Girls high school cross country champion, Saipan International School's Addalee Taflinger, has her game face on as she crosses the finish line of the PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 championships at the Saipan Vegas Country Club last Saturday morning.



LEIGH GASES

Top 3 of the girls and boys high school division pose with their medals and Northern Marianas Athletics president Ray Tebuteb during the awards ceremony of the PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 championships at the Saipan Vegas Country Club last Saturday morning.

last Saturday morning—with Saipan International School's Victor Nash Santos and Addalee Taflinger leading the way.



High School's Takeru Jim settled for bronze at 18:45.

Cross-country star Santos—who swept all four qualifiers—wrapped up the season in the 3-mile, 2-lap

course with a golden run of 18:23. Agape Christian School's Jireh Wang was silver at 18:43, while Marianas

The high school junior actually took a break from running but came back stronger and more

See **SANTOS** on Page 15

Saipan Submissions collects 10 medals in Marianas Open



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 10-man Saipan Submissions Academy team poses with their medal haul after the 2024 Marianas Open International Championship Jiu-Jitsu Tournament (gi only) last Saturday at the University of Guam Calvo Field House. They won a total of one gold medal, three silver medals, and six bronze medals.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

It was raining medals for the 10-man Saipan Submissions Academy team as they competed and hauled in a bunch of hardware in the 2024 Marianas Open International Championship Jiu-Jitsu Tournament (gi only) last Saturday at the University of Guam Calvo Field House.



Nine out of 10 of their martial artists stood on the podium and boasted one gold, three silver, and six bronze medals.

The lone gold medal was won by Troy Santos in the middleweight class of the Master 1 White Belt division. He also won a bronze in the open weight class.

The three silver medals were grappled by young

martial artist Chance Attao in the lightweight class of the White Belt Kindergarten divisions; Kaiya Pangelinan in the lightweight class of the Gray Belt Pre-Teen division; and Jacob Yamagishi in the featherweight class of the Adult White Belt division.

For the bronze medals, Urijah "Wolfie" Sablan won in the featherweight class of the White Belt Kindergarten

See **SAIPAN** on Page 15

Wettz douses 670 Babes, 15-3

LEIGH GASES

File photo shows Wettz pitcher Amlina Evangelista throwing a pitch during the first day of games of the Inaugural NMI Softball Women's League 2024 at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field in Susupe.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER



Wettz doused 670 Babes, 15-3, to gain their second win in as many games in the Inaugural NMI Softball Women's League 2024 last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field in Susupe.

The Babes struck first with a run scored by Pauline Camacho in the first inning. They could've tacked on another run but left the runner stranded on base as the third out registered. In the second inning, there was not a peep from Wettz's offense yet as they had only one hit in the first, while they went down in order in the second.

The Babes added another run in the third from Gloria Rogolifoi, but Wettz flipped the script and had some help from the Babes' shoddy defense.

Eva Lizama started things off with a single, See **WETTZ** on Page 15

